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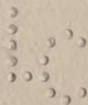
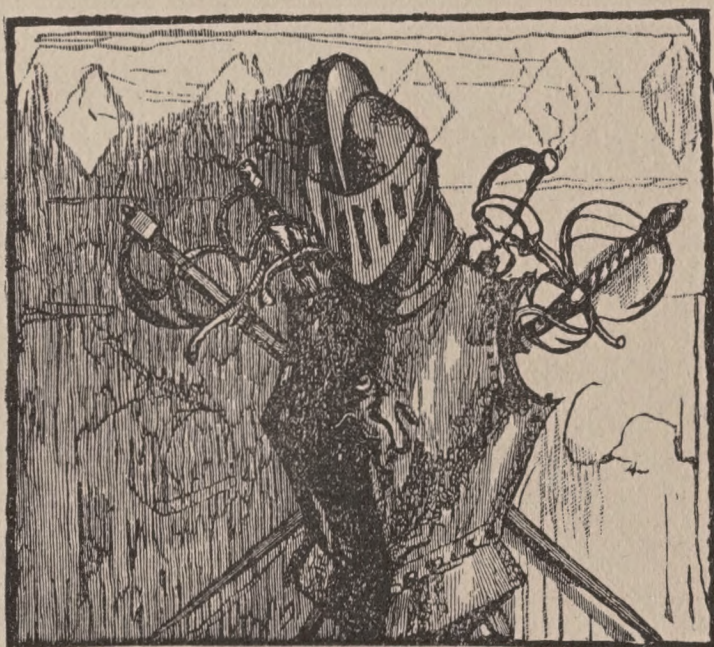
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THE KING'S CHAMPION AND HIS CHALLENGE

STORIES OF
THE MIDDLE AGES
RETOLD FROM ST. NICHOLAS

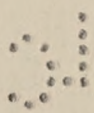


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CONTENTS

THE KING'S CHAMPION AND HIS CHALLENGE	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
		PAGE
FÉLIX	<i>Evaldeen Stein</i>	3
THE STORY OF THE GLOVE	<i>Mary Dawson</i>	37
BERTHOLDE	<i>Mary Shears Roberts</i>	49 —
THE BALLAD OF CHARLES MARTEL	<i>William Hurd Hillyer</i>	64
OLD TIME ARMS AND ARMOR	<i>E. S. Brooks</i>	72
A LITTLE FLORENTINE LADY	<i>Eleanor C. Lewis</i>	87 —
"WITH HAWK AND HOUND"	<i>N. Hudson Moore</i>	95
THE BELL-TOWERS OF ITALY	<i>John Ward</i>	107
BOOKS OF OLDEN TIMES	<i>C. A. Lynde</i>	133
CAP AND BELLS	<i>H. Winthrop Peirce</i>	142

	PAGE
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI	<i>Ella F. Mosby</i> 154
THE CHRISTMAS SONG OF CÆDMON . .	<i>Bertha E. Bush</i> 163
THE BOYHOOD OF MICHAEL ANGELO .	<i>Alexander Black</i> 167
THE SHEPHERD-BOY OF VES- PIGNANO	<i>Agnes Elizabeth Thomson</i> 178

PREFACE

THE Middle Ages or dark ages, extending onward for a thousand years from the fall of Rome, bring before the eye a great number of vast events.

We see the great sweep of the nations covering Europe, the growth of religions, the glimmerings of world ideas, the spread and development of the fine arts, and the building of the cathedrals.

They were times when one man ruled a great number of others, when the lords and robber-barons lived apart in large, gloomy castles and had almost no occupation except hunting and fighting.

But in spite of the great events that took place, in spite of chivalry and the crusades, and the romance and adventure of those days, it has been called a time of preparation rather than of progress. For the world was getting ready for the liberty and freedom which soon after began to dawn.

STORIES OF
THE MIDDLE AGES

In days of yore how fortunately fared
The minstrel! wandering on from hall to hall,
Baronial court or royal: cheered with gifts
Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise:
Now meeting on his road an armed knight,
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side
Of a clear brook: beneath an abbey's roof
One evening sumptuously lodged; the next
Humbly, in a religious hospital;
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.
Him sleeping or awake the robber spared;
He walked—protected from the sword of war
By virtue of that sacred instrument
His harp, suspended at the traveler's side;
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went,
Opening from land to land an easy way
By melody and by the charm of verse.

Wordsworth.

STORIES OF THE MIDDLE AGES

FÉLIX

BY EVALEEN STEIN

A VERY long while ago the little Provençal village of Sur Varne was all bustle and stir, for it was the week before Christmas; and always, in all the world, no one has known better how to keep the joyous holiday than have the happy-hearted people of Provence, the southeastern corner of France.

Everybody was busy, hurrying to and fro, gathering garlands of myrtle and laurel, bringing home their Yule logs with pretty old songs and ceremonies, and in various ways making ready for the all-important festival.

Not a house in Sur Varne but in some manner told the coming of the blessed birthday, and especially were there great preparations in

the cottage of the shepherd Père Michaud. This cottage, covered with white stucco, and thatched with long marsh-grass, stood at the edge of the village; olive and mulberry trees clustered about it, and a wild jasmine vine clambered over the doorway, while on this particular morning all around the low projecting eaves hung a row of tiny wheat-sheaves, swinging in the crisp December air, and twinkling in the sunlight like a golden fringe. For the Père Michaud had been up betimes, making ready the Christmas feast for the birds, which no Provençal peasant ever forgets at this gracious season; and the birds knew it, for already dozens of saucy robins and linnets and fieldfares were gathering in the Père's mulberry-trees, their mouths fairly watering with anticipation.

Within the cottage the good dame, Mère Michaud, with wide sleeves rolled up and kirtle tucked back, was hard at work making all manner of savory goodies, while in the huge oven beside the blazing hearth the great Christmas cakes were baking, the famous *pompou* and *fougasse*, as they were called, dear to the hearts of the children of old Provence.

Now and then, as the cottage door swung open



THE CHRISTMAS EVE PROCESSION

on the dame's various cookery errands, one might hear a faint "Baa, baa!" from the sheepfold, where little Félix Michaud was very busy also.

Through the crevices of its weather-beaten boards came the sound of vigorous scrubbing of wool, and sometimes an impatient "Ninette! Ninette!—thou silly sheep! Wilt thou never stand still?" Or else, in a softer tone, an eager "Beppo, my little Beppo, dost thou know? Dost thou know?" To all of which there would come no answer save the lamb's weak little "Baa, baa!"

For Ninette, Beppo's mother, was a silly old sheep, and Beppo was a very young little lamb, and so they could not possibly be expected to know what a great honor had suddenly befallen them. They did not dream that, the night before, Père Michaud had told Félix that his Beppo (for Beppo was Félix's very own) had been chosen by the shepherds for the "offered lamb" of the Christmas Eve procession in all its festival splendor in the great church of the village.

Of the importance of this procession in the eyes of the peasant folk I will tell you more by and by; it is enough to say now that to be the offered lamb, or indeed the offered lamb's mother, for both always went together, was the greatest

honor and glory that could possibly happen to a Provençal sheep, and so little Félix was fairly bursting with pride and delight. And so it was, too, that he was now busying himself washing their wool, which he determined should shine like spun silver on the great night.

He tugged away, scrubbing and brushing and combing the thick fleeces, and at last, after much labor, considered their toilets done for the day; then, giving each a handful of fresh hay to nibble, he left the fold and trudged into the cottage.

“Well, little one,” said the Mère, “hast thou finished thy work?”

“Yes, mother,” answered Félix; “and I shall scrub them so each day till the holy night! Even now Ninette is white as milk, and Beppo shines like an angel! Ah, but I shall be proud when he rides up to the altar in his little cart! And, mother, dost thou not really think him far handsomer than was Jean’s lamb, that stupid Nano, in the procession last year?”

“There, there,” said the Mère, “never thou mind about Jean’s lamb, but run along now and finish thy crèche.”

Now, in Provence, at the time when Félix lived, no one had ever heard of such a thing as

a Christmas tree; but in its stead every cottage had a "crèche"; that is, in one corner of the great living-room, the room of the fireplace, the peasant children and their fathers and mothers built up on a table a mimic village of Bethlehem, with houses and people and animals, and, above all, with the manger, where the Christ Child lay. Every one took the greatest pains to make the crèche as perfect as possible, and some even went so far as to fasten tiny angels to the rafters, so that they hovered over the toy houses like a flock of white butterflies; and sometimes a gold star, hung on a golden thread, quivered over the little manger, in memory of the wonderful star of the Magi.

In the Michaud cottage the crèche was already well under way. In the corner across from the fireplace the Père had built up a mound, and this Félix had covered with bits of rock and tufts of grass, and little green boughs for trees, all to represent the rocky hillside of Judea; then, half-way up, he began to place the tiny houses. These he had cut out of wood and adorned with wonderful carving, in which, indeed, he was very skilful. And then, such figures as he had made, such quaint little men and women, such marvel-

ous animals, camels and oxen and sheep and horses, were never before seen in Sur Varne. But the figure on which he had lavished his utmost skill was that of the little Christ Child, which was not to be placed in the manger until Christmas night itself.

Félix kept this figure in his blouse pocket, carefully wrapped up in a bit of wool, and he spent all his spare moments striving to give it some fresh beauty; for I will tell you a secret: poor little Félix had a great passion for carving, and the one thing for which he longed above all others was to be allowed to apprentice himself in the workshop of Père Videau, who was the master carver of the village, and whose beautiful work on the portals of the great church was the admiration of Félix's heart. He longed, too, for better tools than the rude little knife he had, and for days and years in which to learn to use them.

But the Père Michaud had scant patience with these notions of the little son's, and once, when Félix had ventured to speak to him about it, had insisted rather sharply that he was to stick to his sheep-tending, so that when the Père himself grew old he could take charge of the flocks and keep the family in bread; for the Père had small

faith in the art of the carver as being able to supply the big brown loaves that the Mìse baked every week in the great stone oven. So Félix was obliged to go on minding the flocks; but whenever he had a moment of his own, he employed it in carving a bit of wood or chipping at a fragment of soft stone.

But while I have stopped to tell you all this he had almost finished the crèche; the little houses were all in place, and the animals grouped about the holy stable, or else seeming to crop the tufts of moss on the mimic rocky hillside.

“Well, well!” said the Père Michaud, who had just entered the cottage, “’t is a fine bit of work thou hast there, my son! Truly ’t is a brave crèche!”

But here the Mìse called them both to the mid-day meal, which she had spread smoking hot on the shining deal table.

When this was finished Félix arose, and, as the Père wished, once more went out to the fold to see how the sheep, and especially his little Beppo, were faring.

As he pushed open the swinging door, Ninette, who was lazily dozing with her toes doubled up under her fleece, blinked her eyes and looked

sleepily around; but Beppo was nowhere to be seen.

“Ninette!” demanded Félix, fiercely, “what hast thou done with my Beppo?”

At this Ninette peered about in a dazed sort of way, and gave an alarmed little “Baa!” for she had not before missed Beppo, who, while she was asleep, had managed to push open the door of the fold and scamper off, no one knew just where.

Félix gazed around in dismay when he realized that his lamb, the chosen one, who had brought such pride and honor to him—that this was gone!

“Beppo!” he shouted at the top of his lungs, “Beppo! Beppo-o!”

But no trace could he see of the little bundle of fleece he had scrubbed and combed so carefully that morning.

He stood irresolute a moment; then, thinking that, if Beppo really were running off, not a second was to be lost, he set out at a brisk pace across the sheep-meadow. He had no idea in what direction the truant lamb would be likely to stray, but on he went, calling every little while in a shrill voice, “Beppo!” Now and then he fancied that he saw in the distance a glimpse of

white; but once it proved the M^{is}e Fouchard's linen hung to dry on a currant-bush, and again it was a great white stone—but no Beppo; and all the while Félix kept on, quite forgetting that Beppo's weak, woolly legs could not possibly have carried him so great a distance.

By and by he had left the village meadows far behind, and was skirting the great marsh. Sometimes he shaded his eyes with his hand and looked far across this low wet land to see if perhaps Beppo had strayed into its uncertain foothold; but nothing could he see but the waving rushes and the tall bitterns wading about on long, yellow legs.

And still he pressed heedlessly on farther and farther, till, after a while, he found himself thrusting through a thick coppice of willow boughs. "Oh," thought Félix, "what if poor Beppo has strayed into this woodland!" And tired as he was, he urged himself on, searching among the trees; and it was not until he had wandered on and on, deeper and deeper into the wood, that he realized that the dusk had fallen, and that he must be a very, very long way from Sur Varne.

Félix then began to grow uneasy. He stood

still and looked anxiously about him; the dark forest trees closed around him on all sides, and he was quite unable to remember from which direction he had entered the wood.

Now, Félix was really a very brave little fellow, but he fairly quaked as he peered through the gathering darkness; for in those days the forests of Provence were known to harbor many dangerous animals, especially wild boars and wolves. He pricked up his ears, and now and then thought he heard in the distance the stealthy tread of some four-footed forest prowler, and once he was sure he caught the deep howl of a wolf.

That ended his hesitation. He looked quickly around, and grasping the low boughs of a slender sapling, managed to swing himself up into a tall chestnut-tree that grew close by; and there he clung, clutching the thick branches with might and main, feeling very cold and hungry and miserable, his heart all the while sinking clear down into his little peasant shoes.

And indeed he had cause for fear, for, not a great while after he had thus hidden himself, a gaunt wolf really did pass close by, sniffing and peering, till poor Félix fairly gave up all hope of escaping from the tree; but, luckily, the wolf



“ ‘HEIGH-HO!’ EXCLAIMED THE COUNT. ‘WHAT ART THOU — BOY OR GOBLIN?’ ”

did not see him, and at last slowly crept on through the underwood.

How long the little boy stayed in the perilous shelter of the chestnut-tree he never knew, but it seemed untold ages to him. After a while the moon rose, and shed a faint light through the close-lapping branches; and then, by and by, Félix's ears, strained to listen for every lightest sound, caught the echo of distant tramping, as of horses' hoofs, and presently two horsemen came in sight, pricking their way cautiously along a narrow bridle-path.

He did not know whom they might prove to be, but wisely thinking that anything would be better than staying in a tree all night at the mercy of hungry wolves, he waited till the first rider came quite close, and then he plucked up courage to call out faintly: "Oh, sir, stop, I pray thee!"

At this the rider, who was none other than the noble Count Bernard of Bois Varne, quickly drew rein and, turning, called to his companion:

"Ho, Brian! Heardest thou aught?"

"Nay, my lord," answered Brian, who was some paces behind, "naught save the trampling of our own horses' hoofs."

The count looked all around, and seeing nothing, thought himself mistaken in the sound, and began to pace on. Then Félix, in terror, gave another shout, this time louder, and at the same moment a little twig he was pressing with his elbow broke away and dropped, striking against the count's stirrup; for the bridle-path wound directly under the tree where Félix was perched.

The count instantly checked his horse again, and, peering up into the boughs overhead, he caught sight of Félix, his yellow hair wet with dew and shining in the moonlight, and his dark eyes wide with fear.

"Heigh-ho!" exclaimed the count, in blank amazement. "Upon my word, now! what art thou—boy or goblin?"

At this Félix gave a little sob, for he was very tired and very cold. He hugged the tree tightly, and, steadying himself against the boughs, at last managed to falter out: "Please thee, sir, I am Félix Michaud, and my lamb Beppo, who was to ride in the Christmas procession, ran off to-day, and—and—I have been hunting him, I think, ever since—since yesterday!" Here poor Félix grew a trifle bewildered; it seemed to him so very

long ago since he had set out in search of Beppo. "And I live in Sur Varne."

At this the count gave a long whistle. "At Sur Varne!" he exclaimed. "If thou speakest truly, my little man, thou hast indeed a sturdy pair of legs to have carried thee thus far." And he eyed curiously Félix's dusty little feet and leathern leggings, dangling limply from the bough above him. "Dost thou know how far distant is Sur Varne from this forest?"

"Nay, sir," answered Félix; "but I know 't is a great way."

"There thou art right," said the count; "'t is a good two leagues, if it is a pace. But how now? Thou canst not bide here to become the prey of hungry wolves, my little night-owl of the yellow hair!"

And thereupon Count Bernard dexterously raised himself in his stirrups, and, reaching upward, caught Félix in his arms and swung him down plump on the saddle-bow in front of him; then, showing him how to steady himself by holding the pommel, he turned to Brian, his squire, who, while all this was going on, had stood by in silent astonishment, and, giving the order to move, the little cavalcade hastened on at a rapid pace

in order to get clear of the forest as quickly as possible.

Meantime the Count Bernard, who was really a very kind and noble lord, and who lived in a beautiful castle on the farther verge of the forest, quite reassured Félix by talking to him kindly, and telling him of the six days' journey from which he and his squire Brian were just returning, and how they had been delayed on the way until nightfall.

"And, by my faith!" said Count Bernard, "thou shalt sleep this night in the strong castle of Bois Varne, with not even a mouse to fret thy yellow head; and, what is more, thou shalt see the fairest little maid that ever thou hast set eyes on!"

And then he told him of his little daughter, the Lady Elinor, and how she would play with Félix and show him the castle, and how on the morrow they would see about sending him home to Sur Varne.

And all the while the count was talking they were trotting briskly onward, till by and by they emerged from the forest and saw towering near at hand the castle of Bois Varne. The tall turrets shone and shimmered in the moonlight, and over the gateway of the drawbridge hung a lighted

cresset—that is, a beautiful wrought-iron basket, in which blazed a ruddy torch of oil to light them on their way.

At sight of this the count and Brian spurred on their horses, and were soon clattering across the bridge and into the great paved courtyard. The count flung his bridle to a little page who hastened out to meet him, and then, springing from his saddle, lightly lifted Félix and swung him to the ground. He took the boy by the hand and led him into the great hall of the castle.

To Félix this looked marvelously beautiful. Christmas garlands of myrtle hung on the walls, and a great pile of freshly cut laurel boughs lay on a bench, ready for the morrow's arranging. But that which took his eyes most of all was the lovely carving everywhere to be seen. The benches and tables were covered with it; the wainscot of the spacious room was richly adorned; and over and about the wide fireplace great carved dragons of stone curled their long tails and spread their wings through a maze of intricate traceries. Félix was enchanted, and gazed around till his eyes fairly ached.

Presently in came running a little girl, laughing with delight. Bounding up into Count Ber-

nard's arms, she hugged and kissed him in true Provençal fashion. Then, catching sight of Félix, "Ah, mon père," she exclaimed, "and where foundest thou thy pretty new page?"

"Nay, sweetheart," answered the count, looking down at Félix's yellow hair; "'t is no page, but a little goldfinch we found perched in a chestnut-tree as we rode through the forest."

Then, smiling at the Lady Elinor's bewilderment, he told her the little boy's story, and she at once slipped down and greeted him kindly. Then, clapping her hands with pleasure at finding a new playmate, she declared he must come and see the Christmas crèche which she was just finishing. She seized him by the hand and hastened across the hall, where her crèche was built up on a carved bench. The poor little Lady Elinor had no mother, and her father, the count, had been gone for several days; and while in the castle were no end of serving men and women and retainers, yet none of these presumed to dictate to the little mistress, and so she had put her crèche together in a very odd fashion.

"There!" said she, "what thinkest thou of it, Félix? Of a truth, I fancy somewhat is wanting, yet I know not how to better it!"

“Yes,” said Félix, bashfully; “it may be I can help thee.”

And so he set to work rearranging the little houses and figures, till he succeeded in giving quite a lifelike air to the crèche, and Lady Elinor fairly danced with delight.

While placing the little manger he happened to remember the figure of the Christ Child still in his blouse pocket; this he timidly took out and showed the little girl, who was charmed, and still more so when he drew forth a small wooden sheep and a dog, which were also in the same pocket.

The Lady Elinor was so carried away with joy that she flew to the side of the count, and, grasping both his hands, dragged him across the room to show him the crèche and the wonderful figures carved by Félix.

“See, mon père!” said Elinor, “see this, and this!” And she held up the little carvings for the count’s inspection.

Count Bernard, who had good-naturedly crossed the room to please his little daughter, now opened his eyes wide with surprise. He took the little figures she handed him and examined them closely, for he was a good judge of artistic work

of this kind. Then he looked at Félix, and at length he said:

“Well, little forest bird, who taught thee the carver’s craft?”

“No one, sir,” faltered Félix; “indeed, I wish, above all things, to learn of the Père Videau, the master carver; but my father says I must be a shepherd, as he is.”

Here a tear rolled down Félix’s cheek, for you must remember he was terribly tired.

“Well, well,” said the count, “never mind! Thou art weary, little one; we will talk of this more on the morrow. ’T is high time now that both of you were sound asleep. Hey, there! Jean! Jaques! Come hither and take care of this little lad, and see to it that he hath a soft bed and a feather pillow!”

The next morning the children ate a merry breakfast together, and after it Count Bernard took Félix aside and asked him many questions of his life and his home. Then, by and by, knowing how anxious the boy’s parents would be, he ordered his trusty squire, Brian, to saddle a horse and conduct Félix back to Sur Varne.

Meantime the little Lady Elinor begged hard that he stay longer in the castle for her play-



“ ‘WELL, LITTLE FOREST BIRD,’ SAID THE COUNT, ‘WHO TAUGHT THEE THE CARVER’S CRAFT?’ ”

fellow, and was quite heartbroken when she saw the horse stand ready in the courtyard. Indeed, she would not be satisfied until her father, the count, who could not bear to see her unhappy, had promised to some day take her over to see Félix in Sur Varne. Then she smiled, and made a pretty farewell courtesy, and suddenly snatching from her dark hair a crimson ribbon of Lyons taffeta, she tied it about Félix's sleeve, declaring, "There! thou must keep this token, and be my little knight!" for the Lady Elinor had many lofty notions in her small curly head.

Félix could only stammer out an embarrassed good-by, for in the presence of this lively little maid he found himself quaking more than when he feared the terrible wolves of the forest. In another moment Brian lifted him to the saddle, and, springing up behind, took the bridle-rein, and off they went.

When, after several hours' riding, they drew near Sur Varne, Félix showed Brian the way to the Michaud cottage, and you can fancy how overjoyed were the Père and Mère to see the travelers; for they had been fairly beside themselves with grief, and had searched all night for their little son.

Of course almost the first question Félix asked was about Beppo, and he felt a great load taken off his mind when he learned that the little truant, who had not really strayed very far from the village, had been found and brought home by one of the shepherds, and was even then penned up safe and sound in the sheepfold.

After a good night's sleep Félix was quite rested from his journey, and was busy the next day in helping garland the Yule log, in giving Ninette and Beppo an extra scrubbing and brushing, and in all the final happy preparations for the great holiday.

And so Christmas Eve came. It was a lovely starlit night, and on all sides one could hear the beautiful Christmas songs of old Provence that all the peasants and the children sang as they trooped along the roads on their way to the great church of the village; for thither every one flocked as the expected hour drew on.

Then presently the stately service began, and went on with song and incense, and the sweet chanting of children's voices, till suddenly from the upper tower of the church a joyous peal of bells rang in the midnight! And all at once, through the dense throng of worshipers nearest

the door, a pathway opened, and in came four peasants playing on pipes and flutes and flageolets a quaint old air made up by good King René for just such a ceremony as was to follow.

After the pipers walked ten shepherds, two by two, each wearing a long brown cloak, and carrying a staff and lighted candle; that is, all save the first two, and these bore, one a basket of fruit, the melons and grapes and pears of sunny Provence, while the other held in his hands a pair of pretty white pigeons with rose-colored eyes and soft, fluttering wings.

And then behind the shepherds came—what do you suppose?—Ninette! Ninette, her fleece shining like snow, a garland of laurel and myrtle about her neck, and twigs of holly nodding behind her ears, while bound about her woolly shoulders a little harness of scarlet leather shone against the white with dazzling effect; and fastened to the harness, and trundling along at Ninette's heels, came the gayest of little wooden carts. It was painted in the brightest colors. Its wheels were wrapped with garlands, and in it, curled up in a fat fleecy ball, lay Beppo! Tied about his neck in a huge bow was a crimson rib-

bon of Lyons taffeta, with a sprig of holly tucked into its loops.

Beppo lay quite still, looking about him with a bewildered, half-dazed expression, and just behind his cart came ten more shepherds with staffs and candles, while following them was a great throng of peasant folk and children (among them Félix), all carrying lighted tapers, and radiant with delight; for this was the Procession of the Offered Lamb, and to walk in its train was considered by all as the greatest honor and privilege.

And especially did the shepherd folk love the beautiful old custom which for centuries the people of Provence had cherished from year to year in memory of the time, long ago, when the real Christ Child lay in the manger of Bethlehem, and the shepherds of Judea sought him out to worship him, and to offer him their fruits and lambs as gifts.

And so on up the long aisle the procession slowly moved, the pipers playing, and Ninette marching solemnly along, only now and then pausing to thrust her nose between the Père Michaud and his companion, who walked directly in front of her. Ninette pattered on as if she

had trod the floors of churches all her life; and as for Beppo, only once did he stir, and then he gave a faint "Baa!" and tried to uncurl himself and stand up; but just then the queer little cart gave a joggle which quite upset his shaky lamb legs, and down he sank, and kept quiet throughout the rest of the time.

After the service the players again struck up King René's tune, and the procession, shepherds, Ninette, Beppo, peasants, and all, once more moved on, this time down the outer aisle and toward the great open portal.

It took some time for the last of its followers to reach the doorway, for the throng was very great; but at length Félix, who had marched with the children in the last group, came to the threshold and stepped out into the starry night.

He stood for a moment smiling and gazing aimlessly ahead, overwhelmed with the glory of all that had passed within the church, when presently he felt some one pluck his sleeve, and turning round, he met the dancing eyes of the little Lady Elinor.

She gave a little peal of laughter at his surprise, and exclaimed: "Oh, I coaxed *mon père*, the count, to fetch me hither for this blessed

night. Thou knowest he promised! I rode my white palfrey all the way by the side of his big brown horse. And I have seen the procession, and Beppo with my red ribbon round his neck." Here she gave another little gurgle of delight. "And oh, Félix, my father hath seen thine, and 't is all settled. Thou art to be a famous carver with the Père Videau, as thou wishest" (for the Lady Elinor had unbounded faith in Félix's powers); "and, Félix," she added, "I trow 't was the little Christ Child for thy crèche that did it!"

Then, with a merry little smile, she darted off to her father, the Count Bernard, who was waiting for her down the church path.

For a little while after she had gone Félix did not move, but stood as one in a dream. Presently a loud bleat close at his side startled him, and, looking down, he saw that Ninette, decked in her gay garlands, and still dragging the be-ribboned Beppo in the little cart, had broken away from the Père Michaud and come close up to himself.

Then, with a sudden movement, he stooped over, and, seizing Beppo in both arms, hugged and squeezed him till poor Beppo squeaked with

surprise, and opened his red mouth and fairly gasped for breath. For Félix only hugged him the harder, murmuring under his breath, "Bless thy little heart, Beppo! Bless thy little heart!" For in a vague way he realized that the truant lamb had somehow brought him his heart's desire, and that was quite enough Christmas happiness for one year.

And the little Lady Elinor was right, too. Years after, when Félix grew to be a man, he did, in very truth, become a "famous carver," as she had declared.

Far surpassing his first master, the Père Videau, he traveled and worked in many cities; yet never, through all his long life, did he forget that Christmas Eve in the little village of Sur Varne.

Those who knew him best said that among his dearest treasures he always kept a beautifully carved little box, and in it a bit of faded crimson ribbon from the looms of Lyons. While as for Beppo—well, if ever some happy day you chance to visit the lovely land of Provence, perhaps you will see a certain grand old cathedral in the ancient city of Arles; and, if you do, look sharp at the figure of a lamb chiseled in white stone

over the great portal. Look well, I say, for Félix, when he carved it, would have told you that he was thinking all the while of his little pet lamb Beppo.



AN EARL'S GLOVE OPENING A COUNTY FAIR

THE STORY OF THE GLOVE

BY MARY DAWSON

THE gloves of the middle ages were very different from those we have now. You could not then go into a shop and order a dozen pairs, at a certain price, to fit you perfectly. But then, you might have them exquisitely embroidered in silk of many colors and bordered with a deep fringe. Perhaps, too, the design of the embroidery of those you bought would be entirely original, intended for you and shared by no one else.

Naturally, the gloves of the kings were very fine and costly covering, with embroidery of gold and silver and circlets of precious stones. Bishops and the clergy wore white linen gloves, symbolic of innocence, or red silk hand-gear with symbols worked in gold thread. The popes sometimes wore them of white silk decorated with pearls. Grave people wore dignified pat-

terns without any gorgeousness, and those who liked to make a brave show chose very elaborate or gaudy affairs.

In the early days everything was not regulated for the people, as it is now, by the government and the law-courts. Europe was still young then, and people had rough-and-ready means of dealing with one another, of buying and selling or giving goods and property, and settling disputes. A glove, as it was very close indeed to a man's hand, came in course of time to be looked upon as taking the place of the hand itself, and, as I have said, it sometimes took the man's place and was made to represent him.

For example: To open a fair it was necessary then to have the consent and protection of the great lord in whose country it was going to be held. Those who wished to open the fair would come to the nobleman and petition him to be present. He might be very busy, or bored at the idea of having to go, yet he would know that it must be opened or his people would be discontented. So he would say to the leaders of the people: "No, my trusty fellows; I can't open the fair in person, but I will send my glove to do it. You all know my glove. Nobody has

one like it in the country. It is the one my lady mother embroidered for me in colored silks and silver wire, and it has a deep violet fringe. You can hang it above the entrance of your fair grounds as a sign that you are acting with my permission. If any one disputes your right or touches his master's glove, I will attend to him, that's all." So the glove would travel in state to open the fair.

In the thirteenth century a powerful earl is said to have delivered up a great tract of land to the King of France by promising him the land and sending or giving his glove as pledge of good faith.

In fact, now and then some stag-hunting lord who, when a boy, had been fonder of war and the chase than of writing and reading, would fling down his glove among the legal papers drawn up for arranging some business matter, and say that that was his way of signing papers and giving his signature. The glove would be duly locked away with the papers, to show that the lord of the land had agreed to the transaction.

We still say "throwing the gauntlet," meaning a challenge, even though we are only defying a schoolmate to "spell us down" in a spell-

ing-bee. Of course, the gauntlet is a big glove. The expression is now all that is left of a very important custom of the rough-and-ready age of which we have been speaking—the trial by combat.

For when a man of the medieval times considered himself wronged in any way by a neighbor, he very often decided to attend to punishing his enemy himself. He began matters by throwing down his glove before his enemy. The enemy, if he had any spirit, never allowed it to lie there, of course, for to do that was supposed to prove that the challenger was in the right and that the other feared to put his fate to the touch. If a lady was in distress, she asked some man friend to fight for her, which he was usually glad to do. As soon as the glove was picked up, the two men arranged a battle, which was regulated by fixed rules. This fight was recognized as a legal trial. It had to be settled pretty promptly one way or the other, as they never stopped fighting until one of the champions was killed or badly hurt, or admitted that he was in the wrong. The champion who came off victorious was said to be the innocent person, for the true knight went to battle with the firm belief

that God would strengthen his arm and direct his spear or sword.

A knight in the days of chivalry, if he disgraced himself and his knighthood, had his gloves taken away from him, just as he had the spurs knocked from his heels, as a punishment.

So many gloves were made, and so many people were employed in making them, that in the fourteenth century the glove-makers formed one of the city companies, or guilds, and drew up a set of rules for governing their men, which were thought important enough to be laid before the king and approved by him.

One of the rules was that if any glove-maker was found doing bad work, that is, cutting or sewing badly or using bad material, he should be brought before the mayor and aldermen. If, when this happened, he was sorry and promised to do better in the future, he might be let off with a reprimand. But if unrepentant, he would be banished from the city and was not allowed to return.

Queen Elizabeth was very vain of her pretty hands, and was extremely fastidious in the choice of her gloves. She must have had as many pairs of them, in that wonderful wardrobe of hers, as

she had blond wigs. The reason she had so many gloves was that, everywhere she went, people, knowing that she liked beautiful hand-wear, gave it to her. She received gloves of silk or leather, embroidered or jewel-studded, trimmed with a multitude of little gold buttons, and deliciously perfumed.

These sweet or perfumed gloves were much liked by ladies of Elizabeth's reign. The father of a family, if his wife and daughters followed the fashions at all, allowed them a certain sum of money to buy gloves. This was called "glove-money," just as we still say "pin-money" (and, by the way, the allowance made to ladies to buy pins in former times must have been larger than it is nowadays, for pins were then quite expensive).

A gentleman who was in the habit of going to Elizabeth's court told his friends that in one of her Majesty's audiences the Maiden Queen pulled her gloves off and on more than a hundred times. This was to let those present see and admire her hands. Think of the little vanities of so great a woman!

For many hundred years gloves have played a part in the court life of various countries, and



THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

many are the interesting glove-relics that have come down to this day, and that are now carefully preserved in museums. Among these there is a plain buff-colored pair of gloves which belonged to the martyr king, Charles I. These he presented to the great-great-grandfather of the present owner. This gentleman had got together a troop of horse to help his sovereign, who was then in dire distress, and the king, meeting him at the head of his men, drew the gloves from his hands and gave them to his faithful follower.

When these gloves were given, the times were troublous. Poor King Charles had other matters, more important than clothes, to think about, and therefore his gauntlets show no sign of trimming. But we have other pairs which once belonged to the same monarch, and these are beautifully wrought.

He wore a very rich and kingly pair upon the day of his execution. For, instead of making a careless or slovenly appearance on the scaffold, as some less noble person might have done, this king went to it dressed in all his state. He told his attendant to dress him "as trimly as might be," and gave particular directions about each article of clothing.

Several pairs of gloves once the property of Charles II can also be seen in the museums and collections.



As for the pretty legends and historic stories which cluster about gloves, a big book would be needed to give them all. Richard Cœur de Lion, returning from Palestine, was recognized by a glove hanging at the girdle of his squire, and was taken prisoner.

There were many delightful courtesies in former times connected with gloves. Lovers exchanged them, and the knight who rode forth to war had one fluttering from his helmet. When a maiden died, a pair of white gloves, the white being emblematic of innocence, was laid upon her bier. Or, if a judge summoned his court, and there were no criminals to be tried or cases to be settled, the judge was given a snow-white pair of gloves.

The etiquette of crowning a king once required that the new sovereign should have his knight to champion his cause. Imagine to yourself the ending of a coronation banquet in Westminster Hall. The king is there, and his family and his court. Suddenly a trumpet blares out through the Hall, and into the place dashes a knight on a fine horse and gallantly armed, spear in rest. This is the king's champion. He proceeds to pull off his long glove, and casts it down upon the floor, and in a loud voice calls upon any subject who does not think the new king is the true king to stand forward and pick up his glove, and fight him to the death. I have never heard that anybody accepted the challenge.

Gloves at one time were very popular as New Year's gifts. One lady brought a gift of this kind to the great Sir Thomas More. Unfortunately, she filled it with gold coins. Sir Thomas had decided a law case in her favor, and she wished to show her gratitude in this way. But Sir Thomas was too high-minded and honorable a man to take money in the administration of justice. "It would be against courtesy," he said, "to refuse the lady's gift. I will therefore keep the *gloves*, but the *lining* she must give to

some one else." By the lining Sir Thomas meant, of course, the gold with which she had filled them.

The Portuguese say of a man, "He wears no gloves," when they mean that he is honest and honorable and above suspicion.

There is still another phrase which comes down to us from the days when gloves were used in more ways than they now are. Have n't you sometimes heard it said, when a young lady has discarded her lover, that she "gave him the mitten"? This was first said in the early times when lovers exchanged gloves as a sign that they intended to marry each other. When a girl broke her engagement she gave back the glove or mitten. We still use the phrase, although gloves are no longer exchanged.



BY MARY SHEARS ROBERTS

LONG, long ago, in the barbarous days of the dark ages, there lived in the small Italian village Bertaguona the ugliest little dwarf you can possibly imagine.

His name was Bertholde, and he is described as having a large head, round as a foot-ball, eyebrows resembling bristles, while his eyes, beneath them glowed like two torches. His hair was as red as carrots, his nose was flat. He had a wide mouth, and a short neck—in fact, it would be almost impossible to fancy the hideousness of this small but clever little rustic.

His parents had a large family, and very few of this world's goods. There were so many children to be clothed and fed that scarcely any attention was paid to their education. Indeed, in those days learning was so little thought of that

it did not count for much, and Bertholde's sound judgment, ready wit, and clever speeches amply made up for his rough exterior and lack of culture and refinement. Next to the priest he was the most popular man in the village. On festival days and Sundays the peasants for miles around would flock into Bertaguona to listen to the witty sallies, pithy remarks, and entertaining stories of this truly remarkable dwarf.

He became such a favorite that when he spoke of going out into the world to seek his fortune, his neighbors offered to contribute to his support in order to keep him amongst them. Bertholde, however, did not choose to be a burden upon his friends, and he persisted in his resolve to make a living elsewhere.

It took him some time to decide which way to go on this his first journey into the great wide world, so full of strife and adversity.

Across the lofty Alps in the Frankish dominions the wicked and cruel Frédégonde and the Merovingian kings were committing all kinds of atrocities, and our little friend wisely concluded to turn his steps toward the more peaceful Verona, where Alboin, King of the Lombards, had recently set up his court.

Some four years previous this mighty chief, with a huge mixed army, had swept down from Germany into Italy, had conquered the latter country, and established his kingdom there; and one fine day in the year of our Lord 572, the small traveler found himself before the splendid palace of this first of the Lombard kings. Bertholde stood for a time lost in wonder at the beauty of the building, the like of which he had never seen, and then he resolved to pay a visit to the proprietor of the wonderful mansion.

In those days the gates of the palaces were not defended by soldiers and guards. The people came and went as they pleased, and were free to lay their complaints and troubles before the throne.

Bertholde had always considered and believed that all men were born free and equal; and he never dreamed there was a person on earth with whom he might not converse quite freely. He therefore fearlessly approached the royal residence, ascended the broad stairs, traversed several lofty apartments, and astonished the court by suddenly appearing in the great hall where sat the king in all his glory. Without removing his shabby hat, the dwarf marched up to the throne,

and, saying never a word, took possession of an empty chair by the side of his august sovereign.

The courtiers were as much surprised at his audacity as they were amazed at his grotesque appearance; but the Lombard chieftain smiled grimly upon the intruder, and inquired of him "what he was, when he was born, and in what country?"

"I am a man," replied the dwarf, whereupon the attendants went off into fits of laughter. "I was born when I came into the world, and the world itself is my country."

King and courtiers now began to realize that they had a shrewd little imp before them, and they commenced to ply him with questions of all kinds. The asking of conundrums was a sort of trial of wit to which sovereigns were much given at this period of history.

"What thing is that which flies the swiftest?" asked one.

"Thought," replied Bertholde promptly.

"What is the gulf that is never filled?"

"The avarice of the miser," was the ready answer of the quick-witted dwarf.

"What trait is the most hateful in young people?"

"Self-conceit, because it makes them unteachable."

"How will you catch a hare running?" inquired the king.

"I'll stay till I find her on the spit."

"How would you bring water in a sieve?"

"I'd wait till it was frozen," answered the dwarf, readily.

The king was delighted. "For so clever a rejoinder," he said, "you shall have from me anything you may desire."

"Oh, no!" cried Bertholde, with a mocking laugh. "I shall have nothing of the sort. You cannot give me what you do not possess. I am in search of happiness, of which you have not a particle. So how can you give me any?"

"How!" exclaimed the king. "Am I not happy on so elevated a throne?"

"Yes, you are, if the happiness of a man consists in the height of his seat."

Then Alboin referred to his kingly power and dignity, and the dwarf retorted with another mocking laugh; and when the king called attention to the nobles and courtiers about him, Bertholde with a sneer remarked: "Oh, yes, they cluster round your throne; so do hungry ants

round a crab-apple, and with the same purpose—to devour it.”

“Well said,” spake the king, keeping his temper; “but all this does not prevent me from shining among them, as the sun among the stars.”

“True, but tell me, shining Sun, how many eclipses you are obliged to suffer in a year? For the continual flattering of these men must now and then darken your understanding.”

“For this reason you would not be a courtier?” inquired his Majesty, whose fingers began to play upon his sword in a threatening manner.

“Miserable as I am, I should be sorry to be placed in the rank of slaves,” replied the dwarf. “Besides, I have not the necessary qualities to succeed in this fine employment.”

“What then do you seek at my court?” asked the king in an angry tone.

“Something I have not been able to find there,” answered Bertholde. “I was told that a king was as much above common men as a tower is above common houses; I find, as I suspected, that sovereigns are honored more than they deserve.”

This was a little too much. The king lost his patience, and commanded the dwarf jester to

leave the palace immediately or he would have him whipped out of court.

Just as he was leaving the room, however, two angry women entered, each anxious to lay her grievance before the king.

The matter in dispute was a crystal mirror which was claimed by both, but which had been stolen by one from the other. I am sure I do not know whether Alboin was a religious king; but it is quite evident he knew the story of the famous decision of Solomon, and meant to profit by it. He immediately ordered the mirror to be broken into bits and to be equally divided between the two. One of the women said, "It is a pity so beautiful a mirror should be destroyed." Indeed, she was so quick to express her opinion that I am inclined to believe she too was acquainted with the judgment of the wisest of kings. Alboin immediately commanded the mirror to be delivered to her, and the entire court appeared to be delighted at this wonderful exhibition of wisdom. Alboin was so pleased with himself that he forgot his displeasure with Bertholde, and looked for approval at the dwarf, who had lingered to witness the result of the quarrel.

The ugly little face betrayed no emotion what-

ever, and Alboin was finally forced to ask the small man's opinion. "Am I not an exceedingly clever sovereign?" he inquired.

"Your excellent mightiness can only be said to be an ass," replied Bertholde, preparing to make a hasty retreat. History does not say whether Alboin considered this an answer to his query or otherwise, but he had the dwarf recalled, and Bertholde repaid him by soon playing a very shrewd and bold trick upon the court, as usual coming out victor.

From this time on the king began to take pleasure in the society of his ugly little friend. Bertholde showed such sound judgment that Alboin was wont to consult him in all grave and important affairs, and the poor misshapen peasant became a regular attendant at court, and was usually to be found at the king's side. The queen, Rosamond, however, disliked him thoroughly, and was jealous of his influence with her husband, and the women-in-waiting hated the sight of the little monster, as they called him.

Certain ladies of the court were eager to take a more active part in the government; and, being encouraged by the queen, at length became bold



“‘I FIND, AS I SUSPECTED,’ ANSWERED THE DWARF, ‘THAT SOVEREIGNS ARE
HONORED MORE THAN THEY DESERVE’ ”

enough to ask that some of them should be made members of the king's council. Alboin was annoyed by the request; for, as he explained to Bertholde, in seeking the clever little man's advice, the husbands of these ambitious women were the generals who commanded his armies. To refuse, without good reason, might even cause a revolution.

Bertholde devised a plan by which the king escaped from the difficulty.

He bought a live bird in the market-place, and, in the king's presence, imprisoned the little captive in a rich casket. This casket, by Bertholde's advice, the king delivered into the keeping of the court ladies who wished to be councilors, telling them that it was not to be opened until the next day. "What it contains," said the king, "is a secret. If it should by any means be let out, you would see that the best interests of the kingdom required me to refuse your request."

The women were greatly impressed by these words; so greatly impressed that they at once began to wonder what the secret could be, and at last their curiosity became so great that the one who had the box in her keeping

thought she would just look in for a minute—when, whir!—out came the bird, and away he flew through the window.

The next day the fair petitioners did not come to court to press their claim. For they saw that the king had made them show themselves unable to keep a secret.

For this crafty ruse, Alboin commanded his treasurer to give the dwarf a thousand crowns.

“I hope your Majesty will not be displeased if I refuse to accept your gifts,” replied Bertholde. “He who desires nothing, and has nothing, has nothing to fear. Nature made me free, and I wish to remain so; but I cannot if I accept your presents, for the proverb says ‘He who takes, sells himself.’ ”

“How then,” asked the king, “am I to show my gratitude?”

“I have heard that it is more glorious to deserve the favors of a prince and to refuse them, than it is to receive without deserving them,” was the answer. “Your good will is more agreeable to me than all the gifts in the world.”

While Alboin and his dwarf were thus talking there came a message from the angry queen,

who was determined to be revenged on Bertholde for his mocking and too presumptuous pranks. The unfortunate little peasant had to contrive many artifices to escape the effect of her ill will, for she too could invent schemes, and had courtiers and soldiers ready to obey her commands. The message was to summon the dwarf to her presence, and she had four large, ferocious dogs placed in the court through which he had to pass. They were fierce beasts, ready to attack any one, but Bertholde, finding out what was in store for him, managed to procure a pair of live hares. These he threw to the dogs, and while they pursued the prey the dwarf escaped, and to the queen's surprise appeared before her, with his usual sarcastic smile.

She finally appealed to the king, and he, in order to keep the domestic peace and escape her importunities, forgot all his fine promises, and consented to have the poor little man hanged to a tree.

The ready wit of the dwarf did not desert him even in this extremity. He besought the king to take care of the Bertholde family, and to allow him the choice of the tree on which to die. Alboin readily agreed to the request and ordered a

guard to accompany the executioner to see that Bertholde made his own choice. The trees of every wood for miles around were carefully examined, but our wise little friend objected to all that were proposed. The executioner and the guards became so weary of the fruitless search, that a message for relief was sent to the king.

By this time another question of importance had come before the throne, and the envoy found the great chief lamenting the loss of his able little counselor. Alboin was so delighted when he heard that Bertholde was still alive that he earnestly inquired the place of his retreat, and went in person to persuade him to return to court. Back in triumph came the dwarf amid the shouts of the populace. His brusque humor and good sense had made him popular with the people of Verona. He soon became the king's confidential adviser, and finally was raised to the position of prime minister.

After the king's death, Bertholde lived on to a good old age.

When he was seventy years old he made his will, a document full of dry wit and sage maxims. He had always said he preferred being poor in

order that he might live in peace and tranquillity. A few fine speeches constitute his chief bequests to his two heirs, his wife Marcolfa and a son, who was under twenty-five when the celebrated dwarf breathed his last.

THE BALLAD OF CHARLES MARTEL

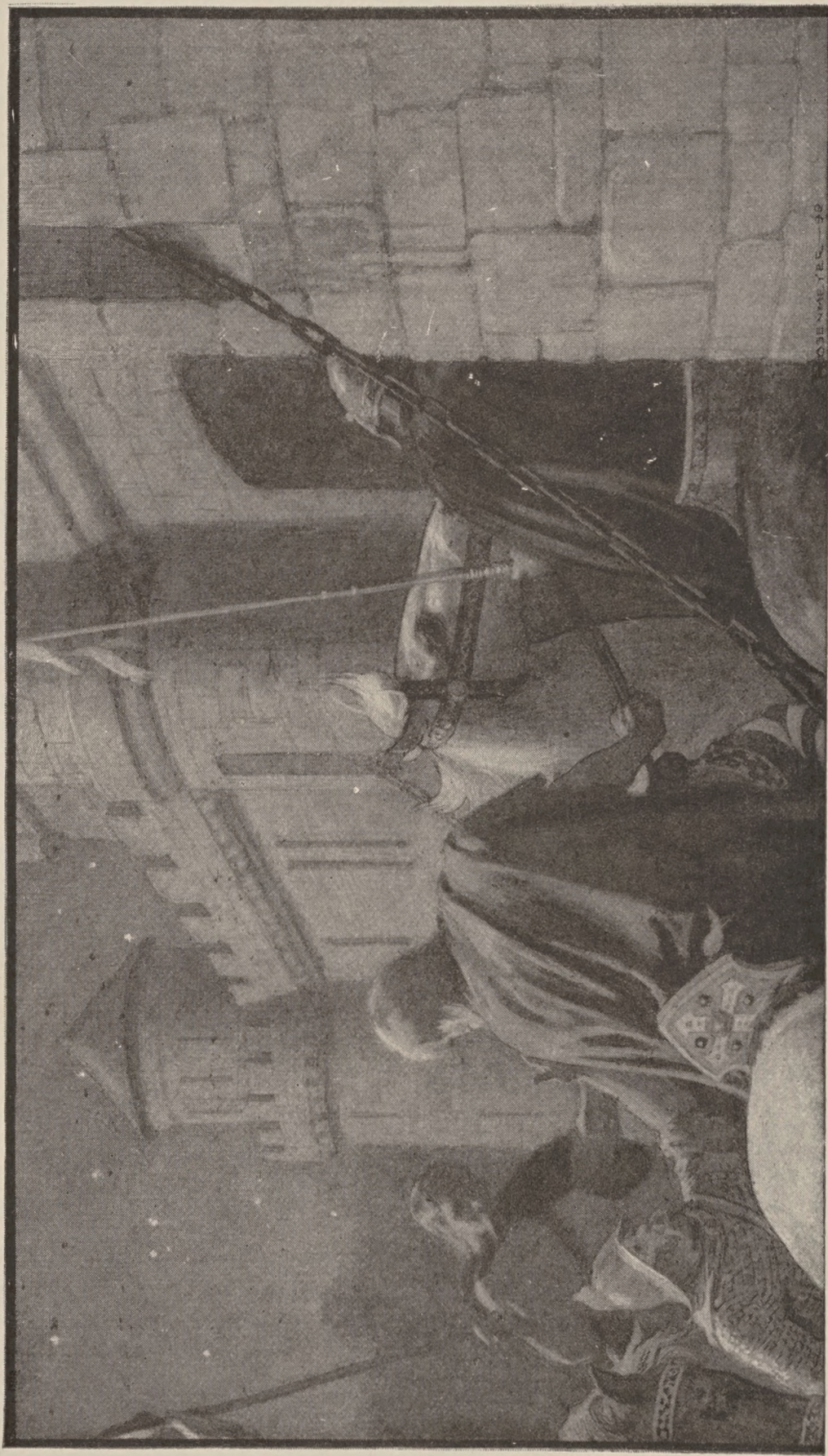
BY WILLIAM HURD HILLYER

STANDS the old Austrasian castle white against
the hills afar,
Every spire and tapering turret pointing to some
splendid star;
On its battlements the moonlight breaks in many a
silver bar.
Tramp of horse, with jest and laughter, from the
oaken drawbridge sounds;
With his archers and companions, with his kingly
hawk and hounds,
Charles the Duke comes riding homeward from his
feudal hunting-grounds.

Clattering up the rocky roadway, rides with wild and
breathless speed
Straight to Charles's side a herald; there he checks his
foaming steed.
Silent now the merry courtiers, crowding near his
words to heed.

"Sire, the dreaded Moorish army presses on through
Aquitaine;





"STANDS THE OLD AUSTRASIAN CASTLE"

Eudo with his stout retainers strives to check their
course in vain.

All the south of France lies groaning 'neath the yoke
of Moslem Spain!"

As the Duke heard, looking upward at the tall gray
towers, by chance

Bright the hornèd moon beyond them rose within his
rapid glance;

And he cried, "'T is right that ever, in the tranquil
skies of France,

"God's own crescent should be gleaming; but I swear
by all that 's high,

While I live no other crescent shall be queen of
yonder sky!

France shall see, O paynim Calif, which is master,
you or I!"

Summer glided into autumn. Northward rolled the
Moslem tide.

Still the call to arms resounded; Christendom with
hope and pride

Heard the tramp of Charles's soldiers coming to their
chieftain's side.

Where the winding Loire rolls seaward with its song
of quaint romance,

There he met the Moslem army, there he staked the
fate of France—

Nay, the fate of Christian Europe—on a single
battle's chance.

Arab chief and Berber horseman mingled with the
swarthy Moor,
Sunburnt hordes from Libyan deserts—Sennar,
Kordofan, Darfur—
Stood the soldiers of the prophet on the rolling plain
of Tours;

Splendid with the spoils of conquest in a hundred
battles won—
Gems from Gothic monasteries, silks in far Damascus
spun;
Golden crescents on their turbans glittered in the
morning sun.

Six long days of fighting followed. On the seventh
day once more
Clashed the hostile arms at sunrise; and the sudden
battle-roar,
Opened then the final struggle, deadlier far than e'er
before.

“Courage!” cried the Christian chieftain. “Let him
die whose cheek shall pale!
Right is ours, and God will help us—if we fight we
cannot fail!”
And the sturdy Frankish warriors hewed their way
through Moslem mail.



“MOSLEMS BY THE HUNDRED FELL”

Lo! the Ameer Abd-er-Rahman lies among his
thousands slain.

Swift the last charge of the Moslems surges forward,
and again

Breaks, as on some granite headland hoarsely breaks
the baffled main.

On that day the Frankish chieftain dealt his battle-
blows so well

That, beneath his stroke unerring, Moslems by the
hundred fell;

And they called him ever after "Carl the Hammer"—
Charles Martel.

Darkness closed the scene of carnage; but through all
that autumn night

Panic reigned among the conquered, and the morning,
calm and bright,

Found the Moorish tents deserted, telling of their
southward flight.

And that shattered host retreated back to Spain, as
o'er the seas

Backward drift the cloudy legions broken by the
rising breeze.

Ne'er again a Moslem army crossed the frowning
Pyrenees.

OLD TIME ARMS AND ARMOR

BY E. S. BROOKS

DO you not think that the garments of iron, of steel, or of bronze in which the soldiers of five hundred years ago rode to the wars must have been very uncomfortable? Look at the "effigies," as they are called, on page 76, representing two royal knights. These colossal statues, with those of twenty-six other noted warriors of history and romance, stand, a silent guard, around the magnificent tomb of the German Emperor Maximilian I, at Innsbruck, in the Tyrol. These two mail-clad figures represent two of the bravest and most redoubtable of the knights of old—Arthur of Britain and Theodeobert of Burgundy. The armor is rich in ornament and decoration, but I have not a doubt that King Arthur felt much more cool and comfortable when he was eating that famous "bag pudding," which Mother Goose assures us

the queen "did make" for him, than when he rode out from Camelot in the splendidly decorated iron war-clothes that are shown in the picture.

But, while these metal clothes, uncomfortable, hot, and heavy though they were, have been a necessary style of wearing apparel ever since the forgotten ages when men began to quarrel and to strive, it was not until a comparatively recent date that warriors rode to battle wholly incased in armor. The Assyrians and Egyptians, the Greeks and Romans of the earlier days, were satisfied with such partial protection as would shield the most vulnerable parts of their bodies—helmets; or head-coverings; greaves, or shin-protectors; and the short oval breastplates that guarded heart and ribs. The stout old Roman legionaries, bronzed and scarred with exposure and fighting, laughed rather contemptuously at the fresh levies which, when sent into the field, wished to shield their bodies as much as possible. Indeed, the first use of the word armor, as we understand it, is found in the works of a military writer of the latter part of the fourth century A. D., one T. Vegetius Renatus, who refers to armor as a defense worn only by the *young* troops; so you see that, after all, the boys

were the first to incase themselves in armor and were the earliest of the knights.

But gradually, as men grew more careful of their bodies, they increased the safety-coverings; breastplate and greave and helmet grew into coat-of-mail and suit of plate, until in the days of the knights—the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries—the men who couched lance or wielded sword and met in the terrific battle-shock *seemed* to be men of iron, whatever they really were beneath their clanging clothes.

Look at the picture on page 78, of a knight in a splendid suit of armor, richly engraved. He lived and fought somewhere about the time of the heroic Edward of England, whom men, because of his sable armor, called the Black Prince. This warrior may have even followed the banner of Prince Edward; he may have fought with Bruce at Bannockburn, or against the cause of the people and Rienzi at Rome.

Certainly here is an instance in which “dress makes the man,” as the old proverb declares. Not one of us could recognize the gentleman by his countenance on a second meeting, for even his face is concealed behind a decorated vizor, or beaver,—a sort of face-door that works up



BRONZE STATUES AT THE TOMB OF MAXIMILIAN I, REPRESENTING ARTHUR OF
BRITAIN AND THEODEBERT OF BURGUNDY

and down on well-oiled hinges. The short cloth sack, emblazoned with his crest and worn over his armor, is the *tabard*, and from his plumed helmet to his pointed *sollerets*, or shoes of iron, he is one mass of metal. The two knights, alongside, on page 82, are incased in somewhat less elaborate iron suits, though they also belong to the age of splendid armor.

In those days of hard hitting with ax and lance, alike in tournament and in battle, the head and the breast generally received the stoutest blows and needed to be the most securely protected. The head-pieces grouped together on page 85 are what a merchant nowadays would call "an assorted lot": the *casquetel*, or helmet with an iron cape for protecting the back of the neck; the *bascinet*, or helmet with a pointed vizor, and another just beneath it that looks like three joints of stove-pipe; the *tilting-helm*, used in the tournament or in the "tilting-field," looking very much like a "high hat" of to-day, in iron; the German *heaume*, or old Gallic helmet, with the basket-like cage to shield the face; the plumed *burgonet*, or old Burgundian helmet, and the rounded one, sometimes called a *morion*; and the last of the helmets, the *helm* and *casquetel*



ENGRAVED
SUIT OF ARMOUR
14 CENT^{ry}.

A KNIGHT OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY
IN A SUIT OF ENGRAVED ARMOR

of the *harquebusiers*—those stout old fighters of the seventeenth century who gave and took plenty of hard knocks in the Dutch wars, or in the ranks of Cromwell's Ironsides.

The breastplate, first worn in front only, was gradually added to until it became a *cuirass*, or iron jacket, laced at the sides. Around the neck was worn the metal collar, or *gorget*; the hands were incased in iron gloves, or *gauntlets*, sometimes armed with long, saw-like projections; and spurs of varying size and length were



"MANY A BOY WAS TAUGHT HOW TO STRING THE BOW AND HOW TO LAY THE BOLT "

attached to the heels of the curious iron shoes that were known as *sollerets*.

Dagger and poniard, mace and lance, bill and battle-ax were the terrible weapons used by the gentlemen in the iron clothes to cut and carve, to pound and pummel, to hack and pierce one another,—and yet those were called the days of chivalry, of courtesy, and of courage!

War is always brutal, always terrible; but there seems something almost cowardly in the custom of those “knights of old” in thus crawling for safety into suits of steel and iron, while the poor people who followed their banners to the wars—vassals and serfs, archers and billmen—had nothing but leather jerkins and iron head-pieces (often not even these) to protect them from the charge and thrust of the mail-clad knights. And the funny side of it all is that sometimes knights thus covered with plate, like modern ironclads, would fight all day without either being hurt. In one of the Italian battles of the sixteenth century, two armies of knights sheathed in the best Milan armor fought from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon without one valorous warrior being killed or even being wounded. Do you wonder that Cer-



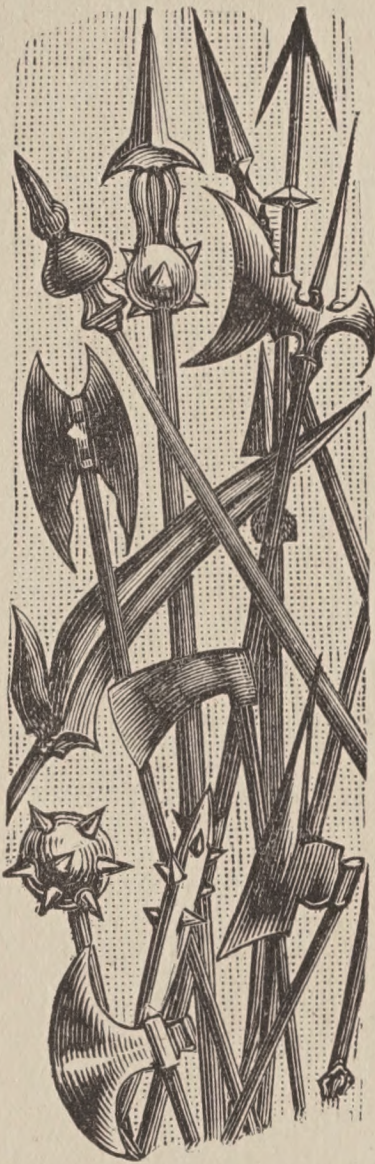
KNIGHTS OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

vantes made such sport of those men in kettles and stove-pipe, as he did in his marvelous story of "Don Quixote"?

But, as necessity is called the "mother of invention," weapons, in time, were made that iron-cased warriors feared even more than mace or battle-ax. The archer's "cloth-yard shaft" might not be able to pierce the Milan armor, but a steel-headed "bolt" or "quarrel," sped with terrific force from the notch of a crossbow, has brought many a mail-clad knight to grief, as William, the Red King of England, and Richard, called the Lion-heart, found to their cost. For five centuries, the crossbow, or arbalist, was a favorite weapon in war and in the chase. And many a boy of those olden days was taught either by the armorer of his father's castle, or by that same knightly father, the baron and lord of the manor, how to string the bow and how to lay the bolt.

The battle of Waterloo, in which the iron-sheathed cuirassiers of Napoleon went down in defeat before the soldiers of Wellington, was the death-blow to defensive armor.

As gunpowder came into use in battle, and science improved the methods of warfare, the

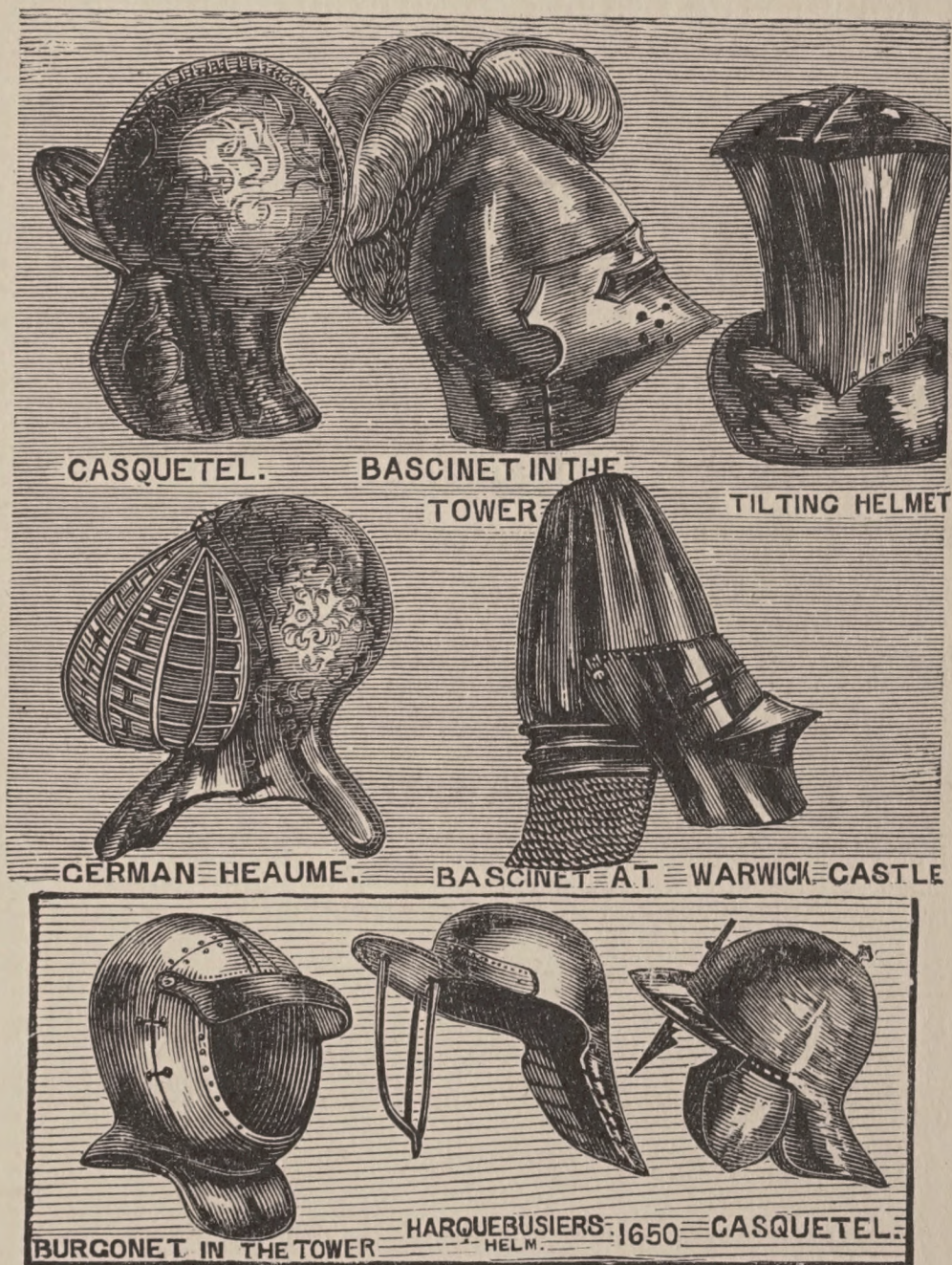


LANCES, MACES, AND
BATTLE-AXES

iron coats were found to be of little avail as a protection against shot and shell. Men grew braver as they dropped the heavy plates behind which they had hidden for centuries. And now they march unprotected by iron clothes, depending for victory upon their excellent drill and discipline and upon the deadly fire-arms which science has developed and perfected.

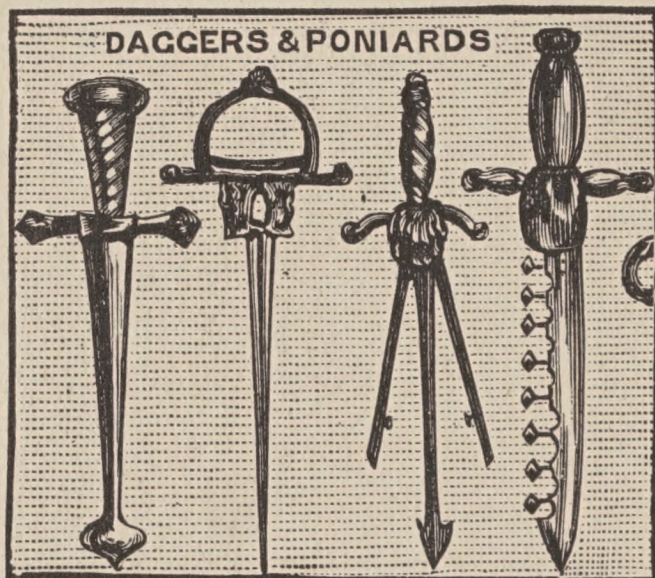
But, better yet, more helpful than casque or cuirass, lance or bill or battle-ax, more effective even than the ponderous Krupp cannon, the deadly Gatling gun, or the swift-loading Martini rifle, is the spirit of justice, of kindly courtesy, and of real courage, which now settles quarrels between men and nations. Argument, arbitration, and mutual concession are doing more to civilize the world than all the cruel war-weapons, and these kindlier methods render more and more useless the arms and

armor of the long ago, which sprang, not from the friendships, but from the hatreds and passions of men.



But breastplate, helm, and sword, and all the knightly accoutrements have served their pur-

pose in the world's advancement, and as they look down at us from the walls of library or museum could tell us many a story of daring and of valor in "the brave days of old."



A LITTLE FLORENTINE LADY

BY ELEANOR C. LEWIS

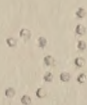
IN Florence, in the year 1265, was born the true patriot and mighty poet Dante. He could be mediocre in nothing, neither in thought, feeling, nor action; therefore his city of Florence and his lady Beatrice were both loved with a reverent passion the echoes of which still vibrate.

The children lived near each other, and first met at an entertainment given by the little girl's father, to which Dante, with his parents, was invited. How he looked at this time may be seen in the exquisite statue by Civiletti, a Palermitan sculptor. Beautiful in the illustration, it is even more so in the original; and we involuntarily lift our eyes from the young lover to gaze also at the Beatrice toward whom his rapt gaze is directed. She is not there, alas! But how she would look if she *were* there, we learn from Dante himself.

"She appeared to me," he says, "about the beginning of her ninth year, and I beheld her about the end of mine. Her apparel was of most noble color—a subdued and becoming crimson; and she wore a cincture and ornaments befitting her childish years." So elegant was her appearance, indeed, and so great her youthful charm, that he could find no words to address her,—he could only follow her with his eyes.

"She was a pretty little thing in her girlish way," says an Italian writer, "very ladylike and pleasing in her actions, and much more sedate in her manners and modest in her words than her years promised. Besides this, she had very delicate features, admirably proportioned, and full—in addition to their beauty—of such dignity and charm that she was looked upon by many as a little angel." Such as she was, she filled, then and forever, the great heart of Dante.

His second glimpse of "this youngest of the angels" was one day when he met her upon the street "arrayed in purest white," walking with two older ladies. She bowed to him, and this token of recognition was enough to make him very happy. After she had passed, he separated





BEATRICE PORTINARI. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF HER PORTRAIT IN FLORENCE

from his friends and hurried home,—to live over the scene in the solitude of his room.

When Beatrice was about twenty, she married Simone de' Bardi, and not long after this event her father—the kindly Folco—died. Dante did not see her at the time, but in one of his writings he depicts her great grief, as it was described by friends to him,—his own sympathy with her bereavement, and the sudden, piercing terror wrought upon him by the thought,—“Beatrice herself may die!”

And even so—all too soon—it happened. One day he sat writing a poem to her, a poem full of her praise, and of wonder at her perfection. But all at once, says Mrs. Oliphant, “the strain breaks off like a snapped thread, and a solemn line of Latin, abrupt and sorrowful, strikes across the fantastic sweetness of the mood, hushing alike the love and the song: ‘*Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo! Facta est quasi vidua, domina gentium!*’ (‘How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become a widow,—she that was great among the nations!’)”

On the 8th of June, 1290, when only twenty-four years old, Beatrice “was made of the citi-

zens of eternal life"; while for more than thirty years her poet-worshiper survived,—to honor her in deed and word, and to illuminate with her memory the stern pages of his "Divina Commedia."



THE YOUTHFUL DANTE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE STATUE BY CIVILETTI

“WITH HAWK AND HOUND”

BY N. HUDSON MOORE

HAVE you ever noticed a hawk soaring and floating high up against the sky? Have you seen him busy apparently in embroidering a wonderful pattern of loops and curves, putting in a wing-beat here and a long float there, and then, suddenly, without a moment's warning, seem fairly to drop to the ground, pause a moment, and then rise slowly and fly to some nearby tree?

The splendid flight was made with a purpose. He was looking out for his prey, and when he saw with his keen eyes some field-mouse scampering across a field, or a tiny bird cowering in a bush, or picking up a meal among the grass, he fell from the sky, seized the little creature, and took it off in his talons to eat it at leisure in some convenient tree.

This method of pursuing his prey was taken

advantage of in the Middle Ages and later times to provide for man one of his most popular forms of hunting. The birds were chosen with greatest care, each kind was trained to hunt for his own particular sort of prey, and great parties of lords and ladies, followed by many attendants, rode out into the fields and marshes to "fly" their birds, as they called it, and watch them "strike their quarries."

I have said that hawking was practised in the Middle Ages and later. Perhaps I should have written that at that time it was most widely practised, for, indeed, as far back as the fourth century hawks had been trained by mankind to hunt. These birds were so highly esteemed that they were known as emblems of royalty, and that man of rank was considered disgraced who gave up his birds, save for the most dire necessity. In fact, certain varieties of hawks and falcons were allowed only to the nobility, and none others were allowed to own or fly them.

Hawking was a sport which was not confined to men only, but ladies and children enjoyed it as well. See our pretty little boy, in the picture, with his pet bird, which is poised on his wrist and ready for flight.

Nowadays, we have men who train horses for running, jumping and hunting, as indeed they had, too, in hawking days; but the man who trained the hawks for a great noble or a king, filled a most important part in the household. Just think,—the *Grand Fauconnier* of France had fifty gentlemen to attend him when he rode out, and fifty assistant falconers! He was allowed to keep three hundred hawks; he issued a license to every man who sold hawks in France; and received a fee for every bird sold in the kingdom. Even the king himself lent him consequence, for he never rode out on any grand occasion without this officer attending him.

In England the sport was just as highly considered. Our little picture boy was an English child. I look at him often and wonder who he was, for I do not know. All that I have been able to find out about him is, that he was the son of a great nobleman, and that this portrait still hangs in the castle gallery where once he lived.

Although the sport was commonly called “hawking,” different kinds of birds which hunt their prey in a similar manner were used. Falcons were flown after herons or other water birds, and, indeed, most of the old descriptions

of hawking speak of the hunters coursing along the river's edge or the brookside. Species of hawks went by many different names: there was the "hobby" for a young man; the "marlyon" for a lady; the "faulcon peregrine" for an earl, and the "faulcon of the rock" for a duke; and the "most noble eagle, merloun, and vulture, for an emperor."

Do not think that one could go out and fly a hawk in any way he liked, as you or I would go fishing; for this could not be done. If you or I had lived in the castle with our picture boy, and had been going out hawking with him, this is the way I believe we should have done:

The night before, if the wind had been in the right direction and it promised to be a fine day, we should have sent word to the falconer to have the hawks ready in the courtyard on their perches at dawn. It was, you see, a very "early bird" kind of business! You could n't turn over and take another nap, and say that you'd come on the next trolley, or that you'd come with mother in the auto—you'd have to be on time.

Then, after directing about the hawks, you would send word to have the coursing jennets (or small hunting horses) ready at the same time



"THE FALCONER"

From the statue by George Simonds in Central Park, New York

for a day at hawking. You would bid the pages look to it that your gloves were ready, for stout gloves with gauntlets were worn to protect the hands and wrists from the sharp talons of the birds. Then you went to bed early yourself, so as to be early astir.

When the falconer got your order he went to look at the birds. He washed their feet in water, he saw that the "hoods" with which they were kept blinded or "hood-winked," when not flying, were well set on their heads, and he did not feed them, lest, on the morrow, they should not be keen enough to fly well for their game. He took particular care of his young master's bird, a fine and beautifully feathered hawk from Barbary, we will say, which he had trained himself. Then he looked at the "jesses," for all hawks when carried on the "fist" wore little straps of leather called jesses fastened to their legs. These straps had knots and loops in them which came between the fingers so as to hold the bird steady. Sometimes the jesses were made of silk, but leather was the ordinary material, and it might be scarlet or any other color that the owner wished. The hoods, too, were of leather, and very gorgeous, with a crest or coat of arms wrought on

each, or perhaps a bright feather or two woven in it, which gave the bird a wild look indeed. Of course, being kept in confinement and hooded most of the time, made the birds wild and fierce, which was a necessary condition for their doing their work well.

You will see bells on our bird's legs. These were the most important part of the trappings, for if the bird went out of sight the tinkle of the bell led the hunter to where the falcon was. The bells were fastened to the legs by thongs of deer-hide called "bewits." Great care was taken to have the hide soft so as not to chafe the legs, and the bells must be chosen with care, not too heavy so as to impede the flight, of a clear and musical sound. For ordinary birds any cheap bell would do, but for our falcon, there must be Milan bells of gold, or at least silver, ringing.

At dawn, after a hurried breakfast of coarse bread, some white herring, sprats or salt fish, washed down with beer or ale for the grown-up people, and milk for the children—all trooped down to the courtyard, eager to start.

The pages held the horses, the falconers hurried about with the birds, the hounds struggled at the leashes, and the huntsman held his horn in



Photograph by W. A. Mansell Co.

THE BOY FALCONER. BY NICOLAAS MAES
From the Wallace Collection, London

readiness to sound a blast for the warder to let down the drawbridge so that the party could ride gaily forth over the moat, down into the green fields and so on to the open. When the meadows were reached, runners and dogs were sent ahead to start up the birds along the water-courses. Each hunter saw to it that the strings of the hawk's hood were loosened so as to be easily pulled off, the jesses were cast aside, and all was made ready so that the hawk could be quickly thrown from the wrist as soon as the prey was sighted.

The hawks had to be trained to return with their prey to the hunters and not to let it escape or tear it, which would destroy it for food. For, while, of course, the chief purpose of hawking was sport, yet the birds brought down were sometimes a very welcome addition to the table, where salt meat or fish were the main dishes, unless the deer- or boar-hunters had been successful on *their* part.

You will never guess what caused the decline of hawking. Why, the invention of the musket! This provided the same amount of exercise, it brought down all kinds of creatures, birds as well as beasts, so that hawks became altogether

unnecessary, and most noblemen were glad to be relieved of the immense expense, which had to be incurred to keep up the "mews," or buildings in which the falcons were kept, provide attendants, and train the birds for their work.

In that noble story of Sir Walter Scott's, "Quentin Durward," when Quentin first appears, he says he has been called "the Varlet of the Velvet Pouch." This was on account of the bag or pouch which he wore over his shoulder to carry food for his hawk, which had been killed when he attempted to fly it in a royal preserve. This was a serious loss to poor Quentin, since a well-trained bird was worth a hundred marks, a large sum of money for those days.

In the time of James I, many years later than the period of Quentin Durward, a "cast of hawks" signifying two or three birds, well trained, of course, would bring several hundred pounds. As the sport was largely indulged in by the nobility, so all the details connected with it were costly, from the silver whistles, which were used to reclaim or call back the bird, to the trappings of the birds themselves, the expense of their keepers, and the buildings that housed them all.

THE BELL-TOWERS OF ITALY

BY JOHN WARD

WE know how important a place was held by towers in the church and city architecture of the Middle Ages. In those days they served a double purpose, beauty and use. Now their air of romance has a peculiar charm. As we look up at these grand old towers, on which were lavished the genius and the wealth of the Middle Ages, we are impressed by their strength, their grace, and their nobility; while, within, it seems as if the spirit of the Old World still lived and moved among the empty spaces. The winding staircase, seeming to have no end, reaches far above us. The dust of centuries lies thick on the rough stone walls. We climb upward through the dark tower, until light dawns again, and we find ourselves in a large space with great timbers around and overhead.

This is where the huge bells hang; some are



TOWER OF SAN ZENONE, VERONA

rung from below with a cord or chain, others are struck by hand from above. They are the watchmen of the tower; they call men to their duties, they warn of perils, they proclaim victories; they live on from century to century far

above the changes in the world below. When the wind howls through these lonely places at night, the beams groan, the enormous clappers swing to and fro, and the great bells sway slowly from side to side. Then at dawn comes the thundering peal of the bells, the ancient walls vibrate to the deafening sound, and we know that their mighty music has floated far away over the plains in ever-lessening waves of harmony, and is heard by the peasant tending his flock on the distant hillsides.

The towers of Italy are celebrated the world over. Every important church is made more beautiful by its tall *campanile* or bell-tower; every town of the plains can be espied from the far distance by its finger pointing upward; every village among the hills has its tower perched on the highest point.

There are two classes of towers in Italy—church towers and civil towers. Of these the church towers are by far the more beautiful, and are, besides, the oldest; they are always connected with some cathedral or church, and usually rise a little to one side of the main building, although sometimes they are attached to an angle of the front. In the early centuries

of the Christian era they were used as watch-towers and for purposes of defense; but after the introduction of large bells into Italy during the sixth century, and their final general use by the churches at a later period, the tower of defense became, in the eighth century, the beautiful bell-tower. From the top story was rung the peal of bells which marked each hour of public worship.

In the eleventh century began the period of civil architecture. Communal palaces with battlemented towers, and private palaces with towers for defense, were then built in large numbers. The palaces of the nobles were often flanked by a stone or brick tower, and we even see tall, massive towers standing out alone in the market-place, the pride of some noble family.

Most of the towers of Italy were built during the Middle Ages, that is, from four to twelve centuries ago. Almost all are square, though some have six or eight sides, and a few are circular like those connected with the two churches of San Apollinare inside and outside the city of Ravenna. The earliest are without ornament, and built of stone or brick; they are heavy and massive, and have either very few windows or

the walls are merely pierced with small loop-holes through which little light can enter. At a later time the windows became larger, especially in the upper story, or belfry stage, and were generally arched and decorated with moldings and colonnettes—that is, small columns. The body of the tower was also ornamented with false arcades composed of flat pilasters and arches placed on the outer surface of the stonework. Afterward many changes were introduced in the construction and finish of the tower: the number and size of the windows were increased, so that instead of being in only the two upper stories, they filled the sides from top to bottom; many ornaments were used and sculptures and even mosaic-work and elaborate stone-carving decorated the surface.

Let us first make a tour together among the church *campanili* of Italy, and glance at some of the most famous. We may begin with Venice, the “Queen of the Adriatic.” The traveler glides noiselessly through the cool, dimly lighted canals, in the romantic gondola, to the sound of the soft-splashing water, and soon finds himself standing in the noble square of St. Mark’s church. Near the cathedral with its many domes,



SAN MARCO AND THE CAMPANILE, VENICE

formerly stood the massive tower built on wooden piles reaching deep down into the lagoon. This tower, impressive from its great height and simplicity, fell in 1908. To reach the belfry stage, where a watchman was stationed to strike the huge bell at each hour of the night and day, one ascended an inclined plane which wound around an inner hollow tower. One looked from the height of 325 feet out over the sea and the islands dotted here and there and the narrow canals which seemed like threads drawn through the city.

Crossing the Apennines, we come to Lucca, a town that dates back to old Roman times, and whose influence was powerful under its "great countess" Matilda in the eleventh century, and later under its talented leader Castruccio. Standing on the old ramparts, one can see tower after tower rising on every side above the roofs of the churches. The square bell-tower which stands at an angle of the front of the cathedral is very noble. It is tall and strong-looking, and its five stories of arched windows are simple and beautiful. Another even more interesting tower is that of the Church of San Frediano. What makes it unusual is the oblong ground-plan, and the double set of windows on

the two wide sides. These windows are separated into several divisions by slender colonnettes. Both of these towers are of stone and are surmounted by battlements; and in both the windows increase in size and in the number of their divisions as they reach the top stories. We should like to linger among these grand old towers of Lucca, but we have yet to visit the two most celebrated towers, those of Pisa and Florence.

Pisa seems like a sleeping city, as she lies so quietly and silently along the two borders of the river Arno. She fell asleep several hundred years ago, after she had struggled valiantly for her independence and had won renown during the fierce contests between the Guelfs (partisans of the Pope) and the Ghibellines (partisans of the Emperor). Though Pisa has long since forgotten the days of her greatness, the world cannot forget them when it looks upon that wondrously beautiful group of four marble-white buildings standing apart in the sacred corner: the Cathedral, the Baptistery, the Campo Santo (or Burial-ground), and, what interests us most of all, the remarkable Campanile, so well known as the "Leaning Tower." This famous tower was built in 1174. Its construc-



TOWER OF SAN MARTINO, LUCCA

tion is peculiar: there is in the center a hollow brick tube or cylinder; around this plain round tower the architects built eight stories of open galleries, with beautiful, slender columns of white marble supporting semicircular arches. The general effect is one of great delicacy and lightness, a fairy-like tower of wonderful grace. The summit is 179 feet from the ground. As you all know, the tower leans thirteen feet out of the perpendicular, and looks as if it would surely fall over at any moment; but, as the center of gravity is still within its base, it is as safe as if it were erect. The foundations were probably imperfectly built at the start, for the tower began to lean before it was half finished; and we can see where at one point the builders tried to bring it back as much as possible to the vertical line by making the columns on the low side higher than the others. The walls, too, are strengthened with iron bars. Fancy the consternation of the architects when they saw their beautiful tower leaning over, and its foundations sinking in the ground! It requires very steady nerves to carry us to the top, and we find ourselves clinging to the wall when we are on the leaning side.



THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA

This is what Charles Dickens says about the tower in his "Pictures from Italy": "In the course of the ascent to the top the inclination is not very apparent; but at the summit it becomes so, and gives one the sensation of being in a ship that has heeled over through the action of an ebb-tide. The effect upon the low side, so to speak, looking over from the gallery, and seeing the shaft recede to its base, is very startling; and I saw a nervous traveler hold on to the Tower involuntarily, after glancing down, as if he had some idea of propping it up."

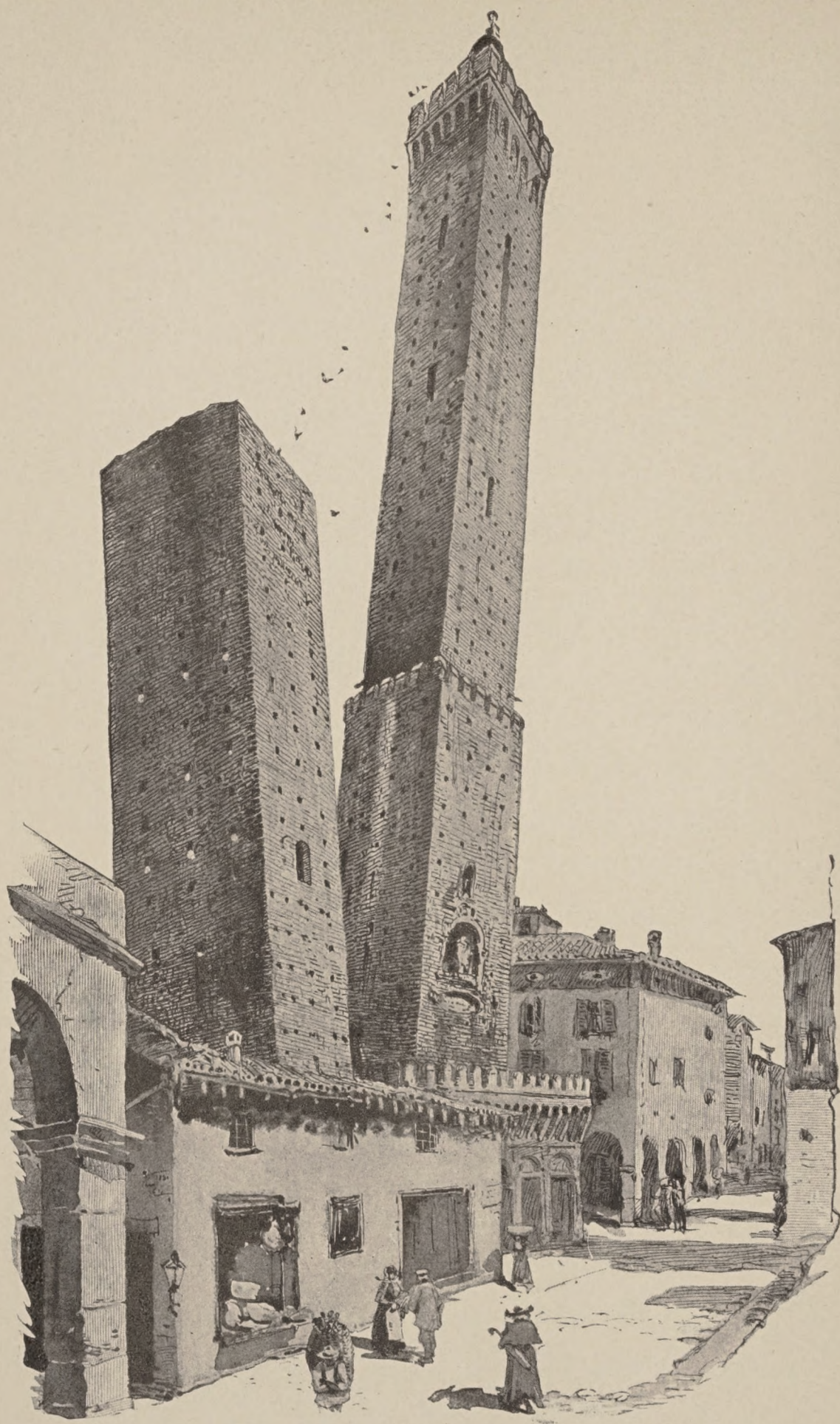
When we reach the summit we must not forget that this was where the great astronomer Galileo watched the stars, experimented on the fall of bodies, and studied the law of gravitation. Here, too, in the upper story, hang the six bells, the largest of which weighs more than 12,000 pounds. The bell-founders of Pisa had a wide reputation for casting bells of beautiful tone, sonorous and harmonious. They lavished on them all their art and their talent.

The *Pasquareccia* (the Paschal bell), the most famous of the Pisan bells, the one which was tolled when criminals were taken to execution, is ornamented with a figure of the Virgin

and the devices of Pisa, and has a rich, full tone.

And now we come to Pisa's great rival, the beautiful Florence—"Firenze la bella," the home of Giotto. This great and well-beloved artist, who was at once painter, poet, sculptor, and architect, was popularly supposed to have been a shepherd. Tradition tells us that as he daily tended his flock in the pasture, one little lamb was ever by his side, showing him the most touching affection. When at last the little lamb was about to die, it spoke in verse to the shepherd, telling him that its spirit would remain with him always, in the form of a fairy, and that through its favor he was to become a great artist. At all events, the prophecy came true, for Giotto became an artist of world-wide fame, and he built a tower in Florence known as Giotto's Campanile. It is said that here the fairy has dwelt ever since, among the bells, flitting through the silent spaces.

Giotto, commanded by the city to build an edifice which in height and richness was to surpass any previous structure in the world's history, in 1334 laid the corner-stone of his great tower. No expense was spared, and some of the greatest artists worked upon it. Sculptures by Dona-

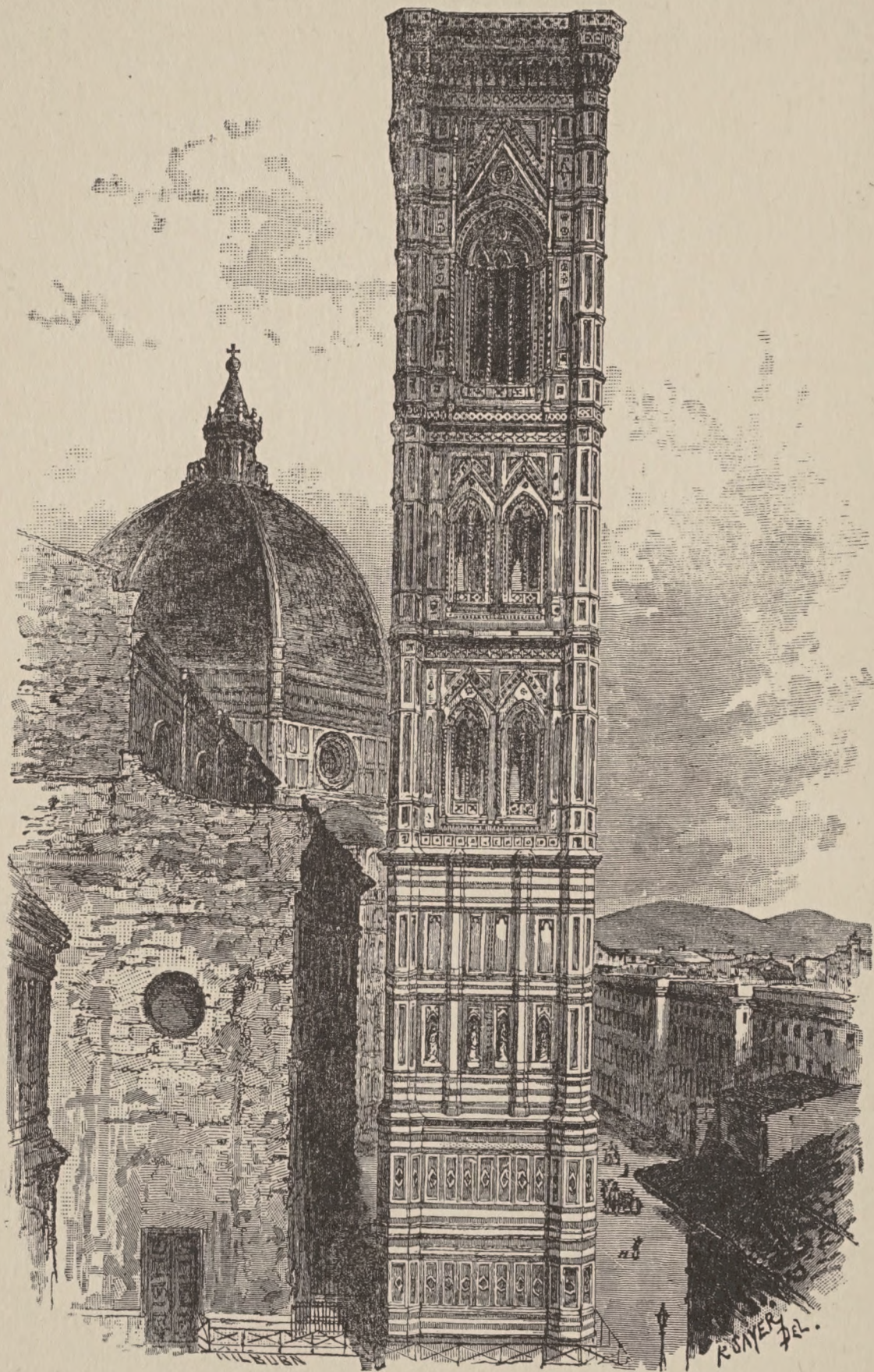


THE LEANING TOWERS OF BOLOGNA

tello, Andrea Pisano, and Luca della Robbia decorate the basement story, and comprise several series of subjects: the seven Liberal Arts and Sciences, the seven Cardinal Virtues, the seven Works of Mercy, the Invention of Navigation, besides many religious and historical subjects from the Creation down. The upper three stories are ornamented with spiral shafts and carved moldings, and the whole is built in alternate courses of black and white marble, the contrasting tints of which have been mellowed and softened by time.

Turning now to civil towers, there are, at Bologna, two interesting examples of private towers erected by nobles of opposing factions. They are called the *Torre degli Asinelli* and the *Torre Garisenda*, and were named after the two great families who built them. They are both leaning towers, and, strangely enough, they lean in opposite directions. This seems the more surprising as the tipping was caused by an earthquake.

In Rome, also, there existed in former times scores of civil towers, a large number of which were destroyed long since. The two most important ones among those still standing are



GIOTTO'S CAMPANILE, OR BELL-TOWER, IN FLORENCE

the *Torre de' Conti* and the *Torre delle Milizie*, on the Quirinal Hill; they are huge brick structures of great solidity, and must have served as veritable fortresses in the troubled times which were so frequent during the Middle Ages.

In the cities of the free Italian republics, the central point of activity, the heart of social and political life, the seat of government, and the place for public meetings, fêtes, and races, was the large square, flanked on one side by the great communal palace or town hall. Here were the residences of the *Gonfaloniere* and the *Priori*, the superior magistracy of the republic. These palaces, which in years gone by were the seats of the great nobles and rulers and princes of Italy, are now usually given up to public offices, or even to theaters and prisons. One of the most striking features of the communal palace of the Middle Ages is the bold and lofty tower, wherein hangs the huge bell which was rung to call citizens to arms.

The *Piazza della Signoria* in Florence was the scene of a great popular uprising on the 19th of July, 1378. It was a strike of the *ciompi*, or the lowest of the people, against the *grandi*, or the nobles who held the civic offices. The bells in

the belfry of the church of the Carmine were the first to be rung *a stormo* (in alarm), and soon all the bells in Florence were pealing a tumultuous summons. The great *Vacca* (Cow) alone, the bell in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, was silent; for it was the insurrectionists who were sending out their appeal from the towers of Florence, and the "Cow," belonging to the government, was ominously quiet. As we stand in the Piazza della Signoria, where stood then the armed guard of the Signoria, and where surged the angry mass of the *ciompi* brandishing their weapons, let us look up at the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, which local proverb has called "a tower built in the air." The saying seems almost true, for the massive structure rests, not on the walls of the palace, but on the deep, overhanging battlements. What a noble shaft it is, so full of strength and dignity! Four heavy columns support the arches of the upper story and high up on the tower one may see large escutcheons, or shields, corresponding to many more escutcheons on the walls of the palace itself. These are the heraldic bearings of the ancient republic, and of the wards and quarters into which the city was divided. The palace was

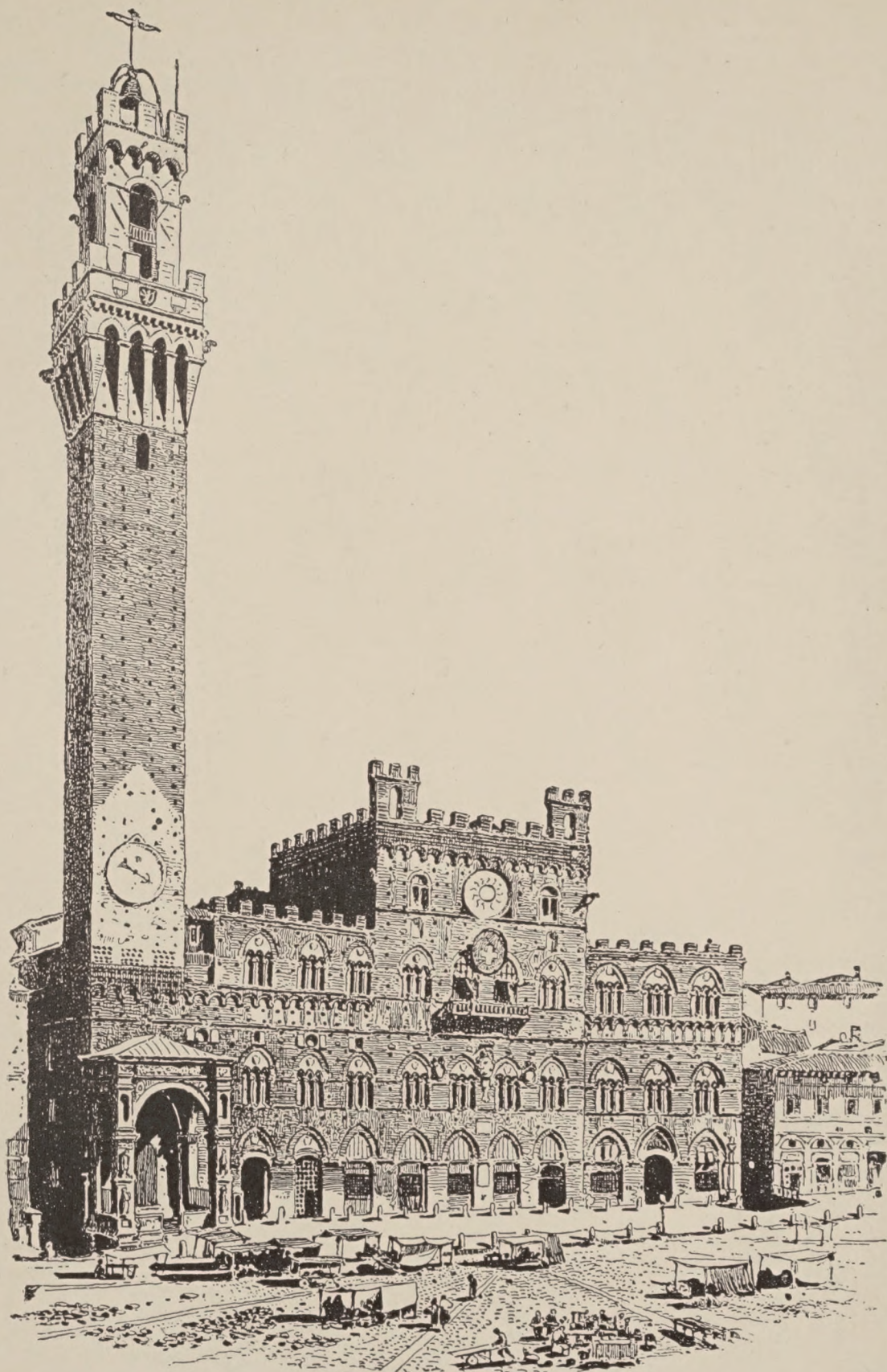


PALAZZO VECCHIO, FLORENCE

erected in the year 1298, but the tower had formed a part of an earlier structure, and was altered and incorporated by the architect Arnolfo into his noble town hall.

Another noble example is the *Torre della Mangia*, rising from the angle of the *Palazzo Pubblico* in Siena. It was built in 1325, and from its lofty height has looked down upon the changes of more than five centuries. In the large semicircular, sloping square below, of which Dante speaks in the "Purgatorio," and which measures in its circuit a full 1000 feet, and looks like the floor of an ancient theater, it has seen many popular tumults during the Middle Ages; it has seen the famous *Palio*, or horse-race, celebrated century after century; and it sees the picturesque market of fish, game, and vegetables.

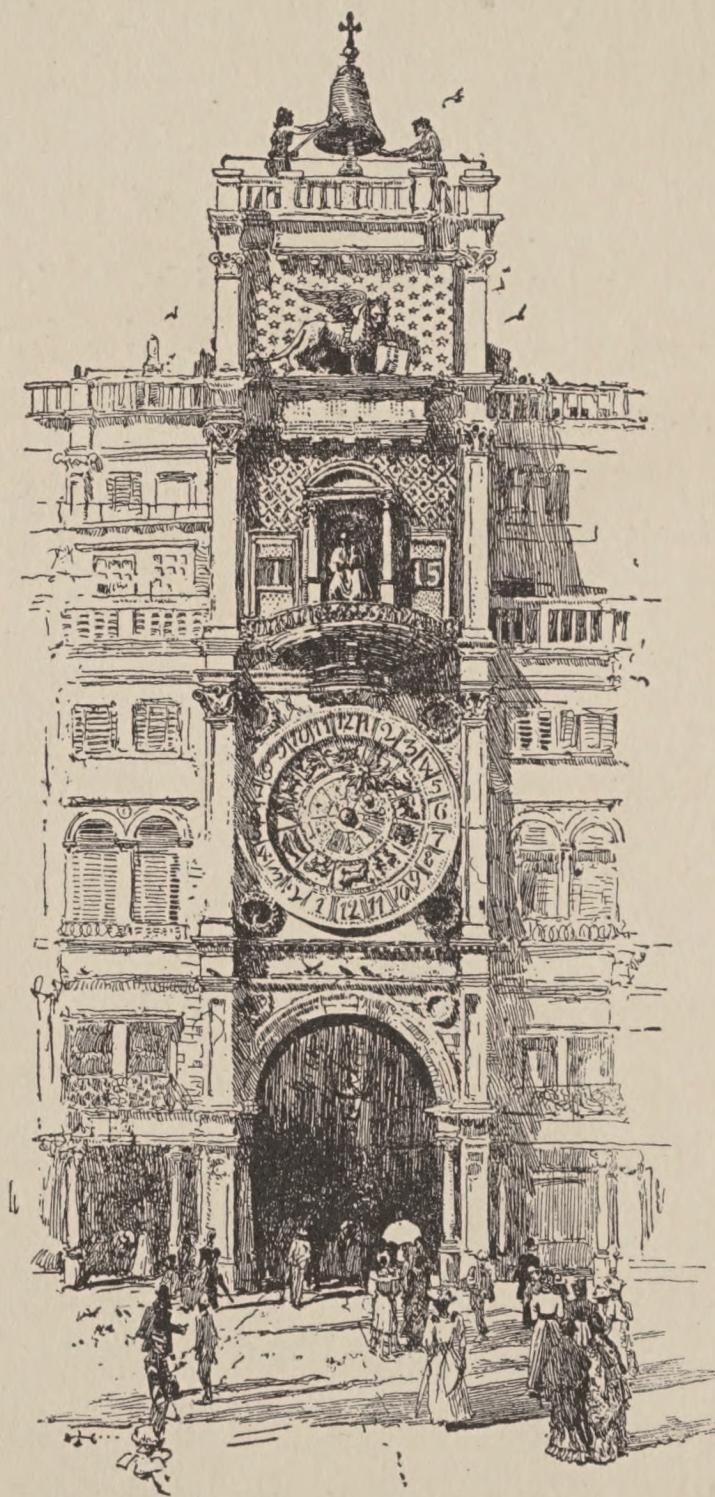
Later than all of these civil towers is the curious Clock Tower in the square of San Marco in Venice, gorgeous with its dial in gold and blue. The twelve signs of the zodiac are there resplendent, and the suns on the hands of the clock travel twice round the great face in the twenty-four hours. On the top of the tower stand two bronze figures of men on either side of



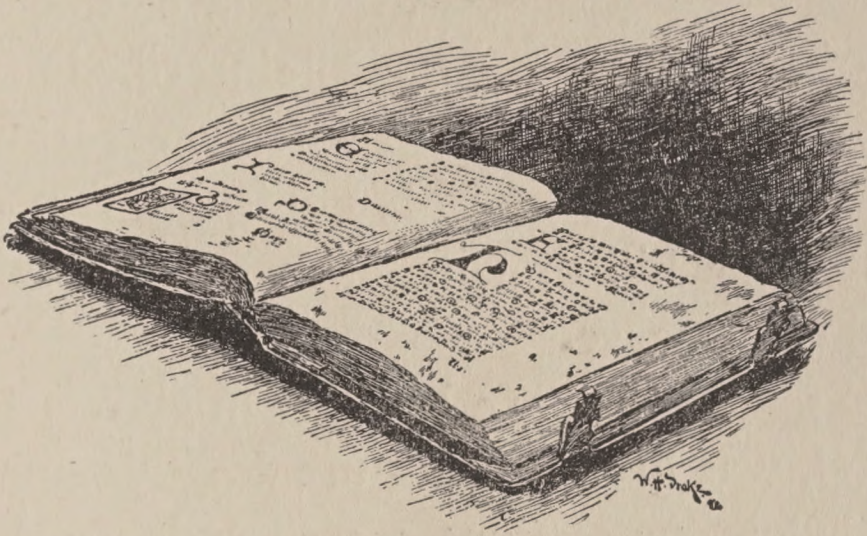
TOWER OF THE MANGIA, SIENA

a huge bell. They hold heavy hammers in their hands as if ready to deal a blow, and as each hour arrives, the figures in bronze, who have been called "Moors," strike the hour upon the bell with dignified solemnity. One of these bronze Moors is said by tradition to have been guilty of murder; for with a swing of its hammer it hurled a poor, innocent workman over the edge of the parapet. As the hour of two is struck upon the bell, the air is darkened by a sudden gathering of all the clans of the sacred pigeons of San Marco. It is the hour when they are fed. You have heard about the great flocks of gentle pigeons which have lived since time immemorial among the spires of San Marco, and which come daily to be fed and to patter in and out between our feet upon the pavement below, with the simple confidence of little children. The superstition of the Venetians has with jealous care kept them undisturbed through the years.

It is impossible, within this short space, even to tell in the briefest way the stories of the most celebrated towers of Italy; and the tragic legend of the Tower of Famine in Pisa, the gentler memories of Hilda's Tower in Rome, with a host of others, must be left untold.



THE CLOCK TOWER, VENICE



BOOKS OF OLDEN TIMES

BY C. A. LYNDE

SURROUNDED as we are, at the present day, by books of every description, for the young and for the old, with libraries in every town and village, it is almost beyond the power of imagination to conceive of a time, centuries ago, when books were unknown, unthought of; when the record of the events and history of the times had to be carved on rough stone in queer, rude signs and symbols; when altars were raised or cairns heaped up to tell some tale.

Yet such a time there was. Looking back ages and ages, until the

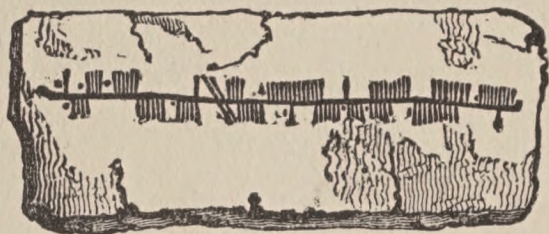


FIG. 1. CELTIC INSCRIPTION ON STONE

time seems like a dream to us, we find that people inscribed on rock, in whatever form they found it, even upon the

side of some hill or cliff, such records as they wished to preserve.

Glad must they have been when clay, a softer material, was brought into use for this purpose. In Babylon impressions were made on bricks of clay, which were baked in the sun, and afterward built into the public structures for safe keeping. Some of these Babylonian bricks, thousands of years old, are preserved in Trinity College Library, England, where there is also a curious clay pillar quite covered with queer-looking inscriptions. Each division is thought by some learned men to contain an entire subject, to be what we should call a complete book; but no one knows much about it, the characters being almost unintelligible to us.

As centuries passed on, various materials were brought into use, and later we find the square tablets of wood, lead, or horn. Some people utilized also the leaves of trees. These were the first

real books, the word "book" being by some thought to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon *boc*, which is the original form of the name "beech." On the smooth bark of the beech the Saxons used to write with the sharp point of the thorn.

Even now, in some countries, leaves of trees are used for books. In Ceylon, the leaves of the talipot, a tree common on that island, are used for a similar purpose. The talipot-tree belongs to the Palm family. It grows to about a hundred feet high, is straight, and has no real branches. When very old, the tree blossoms, and dies after ripening its fruit. The tree never blooms but once. The



FIG. 2. THE TALIPOT TREE



FIG. 3. CEYLONESE BOOK

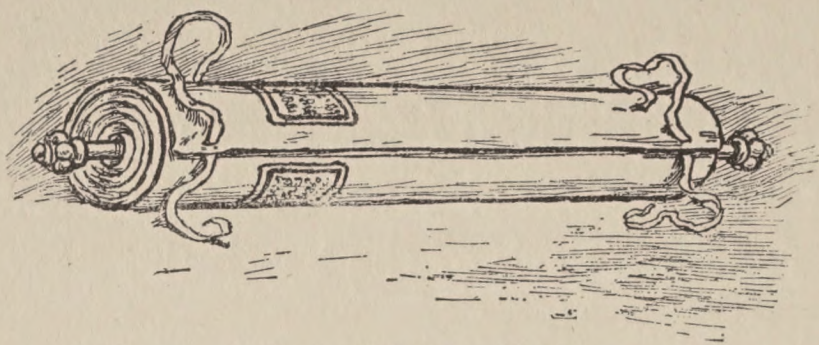


FIG. 4. PAPYRUS ROLLED

leaves used for books are cut by the natives before they spread open, and are of a pale brownish-yellow, a color they retain for ages. The characters are impressed upon the leaf, and are rubbed over with charcoal to make them show more plainly. The leaves are then strung together between covers of board, or of some less common material. A picture of one is on the preceding page.



FIG. 5. PAPYRUS PARTLY UNROLLED

Early writers made use of linen or cotton fabrics, of skins, and even of scales of fishes, for writing. For a long period papyrus was used, the

books being made in rolls, being about one and a half feet wide and sometimes fifty feet

long (Fig. 4). Papyrus was a flag, or bulrush, growing eight or ten feet high, found in the marshes of Egypt; from its inner pith the form of paper called papyrus was made. A most extraordinary papyrus was discovered at Memphis, supposed to be more than 3000 years old. It measured 100 feet in length. It is a "funeral roll," and is preserved in the British Museum. Papyrus sheets were neatly joined, attached to a stick, and rolled upon it (whence we have our word "volume" from the Latin verb *volvere*, to roll). The titles were written on tags attached to the sticks, or inscribed on the outside of the rolls. The rolls were kept in round wooden boxes resembling the old-fashioned bandboxes, and could easily be carried about.

When the literary jealousy of the Egyptians caused them to stop the supply of papyrus, the king of Pergamos, a city in Asia Minor, introduced the use of sheepskin in a form called from the place of its invention, *pergamona*, whence our word "parchment" is believed to be derived. Vellum, a finer article made from calfskin, was also used. Many of the books done on vellum in the Middle Ages were transcribed by monks, and often it took years to complete a single copy.

Books consisting of two or three leaves of lead, thinly covered with wax, on which they wrote with an iron pen or stylus, the leaves being joined by iron rings or by ribbons, were also used by the ancients (Fig 6).

Books remained very scarce and expensive until after the introduction of paper made from linen, and the invention of printing.

When the first libraries were established in England, books were so rare and valuable that they were usually attached to the shelves by iron chains to prevent their being stolen.

A fashion of expensive bindings prevailed for a long time, and great skill was exhibited in bindings ornamented by embroidery and various styles of needlework, as well as in bindings studded with precious stones. Queen Elizabeth used to carry about with her, suspended by a golden chain, a book called "The Golden Manual of Prayer," bound in solid gold. On one side was a representation of "The Judgment of Solomon"; on the other the brazen serpent with the wounded Israelites looking at it. In the Jewel House of the Tower of London is a book bound in gold and enamel, clasped with a ruby; on one side is a cross of diamonds with other diamonds

around it; on the other a flower-de-luce in diamonds, and the arms of England. The book is enriched with small rubies and emeralds.

Year after year has brought its changes among books, making them more and more attainable by the poorer people, until now there is

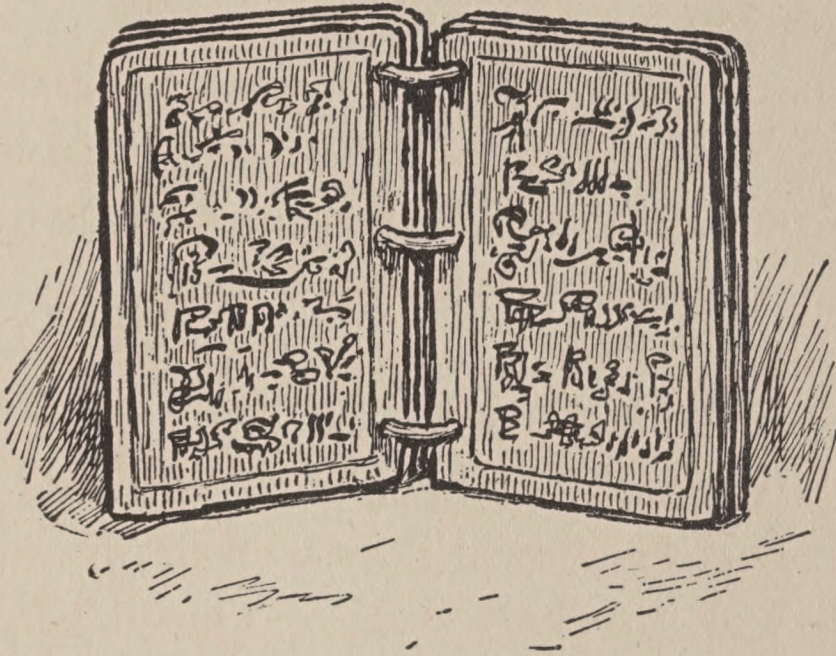


FIG. 6. LEAD BOOK

scarcely a family, in our country at least, so poor as not to be the owners of a few books; while in most homes we find well-stored shelves and rooms, filled with interesting volumes, and upon the tables are the daily papers and popular magazines. Even the children have magazines and papers of their own, nowadays, and



A MONK TRANSCRIBING A BOOK TO A ROLL OF PARCHMENT

(From an old drawing)

books by the thousands are written for young readers.

Have you ever thought of those olden times before books, as we know them, had come into existence? Imagine yourself deciphering a lesson in history from some slab of rock, or spelling

it out from a lengthy papyrus roll—or, worse still, suppose you had to grow up in utter ignorance of all book knowledge!

Who can help being grateful for the privilege of living in an age when books are within the reach of all?

CAP AND BELLS

BY H. WINTHROP PEIRCE

IN the Middle Ages, when kings and great lords had almost no occupation besides fighting and hunting, they lived apart in large, gloomy castles, built for strength and defense, with little thought of cheerfulness. During the season of the year when they could not ride with hawks and hounds to hunt the wild animals which then abounded in all parts of Europe, nor enjoy themselves in their own pleasure-grounds, time must have hung heavily upon their hands. Books were few, and learning was thought fit only for "women and clarks."

Therefore, to beguile their time, almost every man of means kept a professional "fool" or "jester." And the jester often was a dwarf, more or less deformed, whose misfortune was considered a fit subject for mirth in those rough days.

The fool's dress was usually of rich materials,

made in the most fantastic style, and of various hues, but yellow was the distinctive color for ornament and fringes. Cocks' feathers and foxes' tails were worn, while a number of little bells, attached to the clothes, tinkled gaily with every motion. Jesters always wore a wallet, and they carried a stick, on the end of which was either a funny head carved in wood, or else a bladder with a few rattling peas inside. The favored fool had access to his master, even if it should be a king, at any hour of the day or night. And, naturally, through this intimacy and the fact that his business was to amuse, he frequently obtained great influence over his master, who, with the entire household, would become much attached to him.

Shakespeare represents domestic fools as often bitter and sarcastic, but faithful and attached, ready to go into poverty and exile rather than leave their friends when overtaken by adversity.

King Lear, when driven out into the storm by his daughters, is followed by his fool. And when Rosalind is banished from her uncle's court, Touchstone leaves his comfortable home, and goes with her and her faithful cousin into the wild forest. Hamlet remembers, when he sees

the skull of his father's jester Yorick, how "he had borne me on his back a thousand times," and that he, when a light-hearted, happy little prince, "had pressed his lips he knew not how oft." And speaking of Shakspeare, all who have read the great master's plays must have noticed how often he puts wonderful bits of wisdom into the lively, mocking raillery of the beloved fool.

An Italian jester named Gonello, born in Florence about 1400 A. D., entered the service of the Marquis of Ferrara, by whom his judgment was so highly prized that he was consulted on the most important state affairs. In course of time, the Marquis lost his health, and the doctors declared that nothing would restore it save the shock of an unexpected cold bath. But no one dared to give the Marquis a ducking.

At last, Gonello resolved, as his patron grew worse and worse, that he would try what no other friend or servant of the Marquis would venture to do. One day, walking beside the river with his lord, Gonello, without a word, pushed him in, waited just long enough to see that the Marquis was pulled out alive, and then fled to Padua.

The sudden plunge had the wished-for effect

on the health of the Marquis; but he, far from being grateful, flew into a rage, and issued an edict that, if Gonello should ever set foot again on the soil of Ferrara, his life should be forfeited.

Poor Gonello was homesick enough in Padua. He read the edict through and through, until he saw that he was prohibited only from setting foot on the *soil* of Ferrara. Then he quickly got a donkey-cart, filled it with earth, and labeled it "Paduan ground." Perched on this, he passed in state into the streets of Ferrara. But he was soon seized, thrown into prison, tried, and convicted of having laid violent hands on the Marquis, and of having disobeyed his edict, for which offenses he must die.

On the day appointed for his execution, the whole city turned out to see him. The poor fellow was blindfolded; his head was placed on the block. But the executioner, instead of lifting the ax, dashed a pailful of water on Gonello's neck.

Then the people knew that all the dreadful preparations had been made in jest. How they waved their caps, and cheered, and shouted: "Long live the Marquis!" "Long live Gonello!"

But Gonello did not rise, and when his friends,

with laughter and congratulations, lifted him, they found that the poor fellow could joke with them no more. He had been frightened to death. The Marquis, full of remorse at having, by his cruel joke, destroyed his faithful friend, gave him a grand funeral, and did everything in his power to honor his memory.

Francis I, of France, had a jester of great beauty and refinement, who wrote verses which the king was glad to pass off as his own. This person was selected, when a boy of thirteen, on account of his remarkable brightness and beauty, to be the King's jester, notwithstanding the entreaties of his parents, who were of noble birth, and in spite of the tears and prayers of the boy himself, who had hoped to be a soldier and a great man. It is sad to think of the noble-hearted lad, secretly pining in the splendor of the court, yet bravely doing his best to enliven the dull hours, and perhaps trying his powers at a war of wits when he would have preferred to do battle in earnest.

But I cannot give you his history here. You may be sure, however, that he was not so happy as Will Somers, of England. This famous wit, who was jester to Henry VIII, asked among



YORICK AND YOUNG HAMLET

many jokes, "What is it, that the less there is of it the more it is feared?" and then enjoyed the surprise of the court on his telling the answer—"A little bridge over a deep river." His reputation spread to his old home in Shropshire, and his aged uncle trudged up to Greenwich to visit him at the court. The countryman's old-fashioned dress and simple manner, as he passed through the streets asking the way to the King's palace, attracted attention. When he found the building, he asked the jeering pages at the gate, "Is there not a 'gentleman' at court named William Somers?" The pages laughed in disdain, and led the old man to a place where Will was sleeping in the park, with his head resting on a cushion that a poor woman had given him because he had interceded to save the life of her son, who had been condemned to be hanged as a pirate.

Will greeted his uncle with affection, and as he led him through the presence chamber, where crowds of richly dressed courtiers were assembled, he called aloud: "Room, knaves! Room for me and my uncle!"

Then, seeing that his relative's dress was not a fitting one in which to appear before the King,

Will took him to his own room and dressed him in one of his queer motley suits. This done, Will brought his uncle in before "Bluff King Hal," who was much amused at the contrast between the venerable figure and its droll costume. Treating the uncle with respect due his years, the King encouraged him to talk.

The old man then told His Majesty about a common near his home, which had been unjustly shut up from the poorer people. And the King was so much interested in his account of the affair, that he ordered the ground to be thrown open to the public at once, and created the old uncle bailiff of the common, with a salary of twenty pounds a year, which in money of to-day would be a very comfortable income.

In those early times jesters appeared on all occasions. They bustled about at the tournaments, and were busy with sharp remarks on the proceedings—now full of pity, now exulting, ready to help the favorite knight to victory or to lead from the field his fallen foe.

A jester once complained to his king that an offended noble had threatened to kill him.

"If he does," said His Majesty, "I shall have him hanged a quarter of an hour afterward."



Engraved by Cole, after the painting by Zannacris

THE KING'S FAVORITE

“Ah, but that would not save my life,” said the Fool. “Could n’t you have him hanged a quarter of an hour before?”

Jesters filled, in their time, a humble but important place, telling the truth to those who would not have heard it from any one else. And they sometimes acquired such great influence that many persons found it safest to treat them with consideration, or learned to their sorrow that to offend the king’s favorite was to place an obstacle in their own road to advancement.

But as intelligence became more general and reading more common, household jesters were no longer needed, and the theater and the production of books and ballads gave a new field for the talents of those who in ruder times would have worn the cap and bells.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

BY ELLA F. MOSBY

ST. FRANCIS lived in Italy in the thirteenth century, and founded the order of friars called the Franciscans. He was noted for his piety, his hatred of all quarrels, and the great kindness of his heart. He loved animals, and was gentle to them, even in an age when human life and suffering were of small account. He loved to wander alone over the beautiful Umbrian mountains, singing hymns that told of his joy in the light of the sun and moon, and of his love for the birds and animals, whom he called his "brothers and sisters."

It is said that once he saw a number of birds together, and, coming up, talked to them in such gentle tones about God's care for them that they did not fly away, but, waving their wings, looked up at St. Francis with their bright eyes, as if they could understand what he said; and I have

no doubt that they did understand that he loved them. When he walked in the fields, the sheep and their young lambs would follow him; and even hares and rabbits would yield to his gentle power, winning tones and looks, and, drawing near, would nestle in his bosom.

One day he was passing through a meadow, when he saw one little lamb feeding in the midst of a flock of goats; and he was filled with pity, fearing that they might hurt it in some way. He longed to get the lamb out of danger, and wanted to buy it and take care of it himself; but he had no money. While he was grieving about it, a rich man came by, and him he persuaded to buy the lamb. The man then gave the timid little creature to St. Francis, and it fed gladly from his hand, and laid its head in his bosom.

Whenever St. Francis found helpless insects in his path, he gently lifted them out of the way, so that they might not be trodden on, nor injured. The grasshoppers would alight on his friendly hand and play their fiddles to him; and at one time a lark, whose nest was near his cell, and who had become used to his loving voice and quiet movements, brought her little nestlings to be fed from his hand.

Perhaps we all might live on such kindly terms with the wild creatures of the wood and field, if only we should love them as he loved them. I remember that the sparrows would alight upon my father's head and hand while he was resting in the porch, and the bees would walk about over his hands without stinging him, although they would quickly and fiercely drive away an intruder whom they did not trust.

Nathaniel Hawthorne tells us, in his story "The Marble Faun," of a young man who had taught the dumb creatures in his native woods to love him and come at his call. But afterward he had the misfortune to slay a human being, and then the shy animals fled from him, as if they had been told of the crime of their formerly guiltless friend. No doubt they felt the changed tone of his voice and the restlessness of his movements.

St. Francis of Assisi loved especially the birds, and of all birds he loved best the dove; but many beautiful stories are told about him and the swallows that chirped and nested under the eaves of his dwelling, of the multitudes of birds upon the lagoons of Venice, and of the nightingale that sang near him at night. He once saw a young



From a painting by Benouville

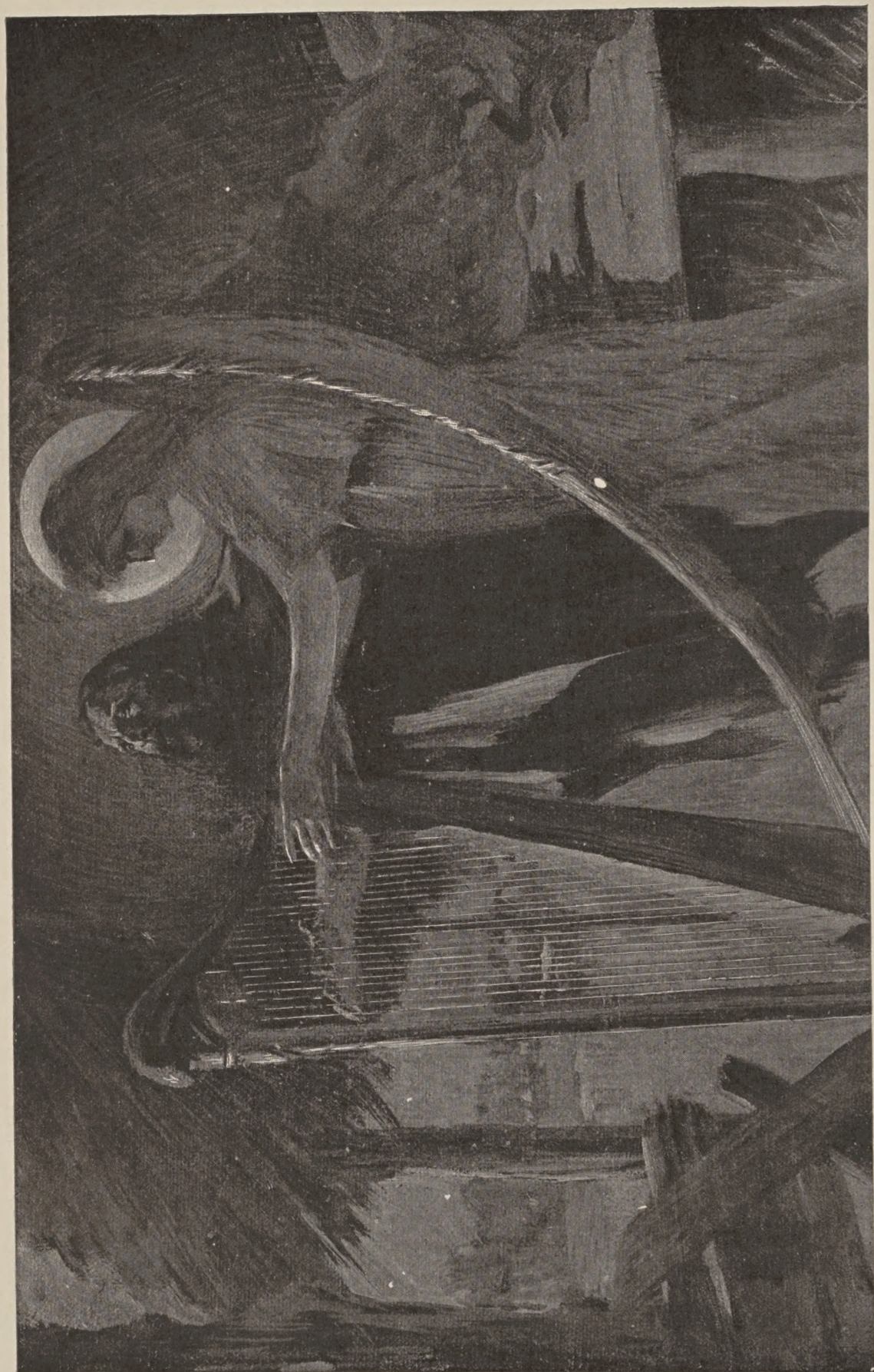
THE DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS

man going to town, carrying some doves for sale; and he begged so tenderly for them that they were given to him. He put them in his bosom, and carried them home, where he made a nest for them and tended them until they learned to eat from his hands in perfect trust.

He had a friend, Antony of Padua, who was full of the same spirit of peacefulness and loving good will. This man was an eloquent preacher, and in his sermons he told the people, who crowded to hear him, about the gentleness and whiteness of the swans, the mutual love of the storks, and the purity and fragrance of the blossoms; and he tried to show how beautiful is a life of love and peace. The country was full of wars, and quarrels, and oppressions, but Antony bravely went among the roughest men in the wildest places, to help the poor and ill-treated, and to tell the truth to all. St. Francis and he were wonderfully patient and loving toward dumb creatures, and believed strongly in the good that the animals do and might be brought to do. And so it was not so very strange that people who knew them should believe the pretty tale that these kind men preached to the birds and fishes who crowded to listen to their loving

words. Perhaps the story was not true; but it is true that all men should be gentle to the creatures of earth, air, and water, as were the good St. Francis of Assisi and Antony, his friend.

It is pleasant to hear of men like these, who, even hundreds of years ago, were such stanch lovers and defenders of our lowly fellow-creatures.



“HE OPENED HIS LIPS IN SONG”

THE CHRISTMAS SONG OF CÆDMON

BY BERTHA E. BUSH

THEY gathered round the tables,
In the rough, glad days of yore,
And their boisterous shouts made the arches ring
At the sight of the smoking boar.

They passed the harp around the board,
And every one must sing
For the honor of his lady-love,
Or the glory of his king.

The page he lilted a tender lay
As he lightly touched the string;
The yeoman shouted a jocund catch
As he thumped the sounding thing.

But the herdsman looked at his knotted hands:
"I should rend the harp in twain!
And never a song know I, save the shout
That calls the cattle again."

Then loud they mocked at the clumsy churl,
Till he rose with awkward stride
And made his way to the cattle-sheds,
His shame and grief to hide.

But lo! as he slept on the straw, he caught
The glint of an angel's wing:
God's angel placed in his hand a harp,
And bade the herdsman sing.

"I cannot, Lord, for my clumsy hands,
And my voice so harsh and loud,
And I have no words."
"I will give thee words."
And Cædmon obedient bowed.

The herdsman stood in his laborer's smock,
Nor questioned, but ere long
Like a child at the voice of his mother,
He opened his lips in song.

The lilting page and the mocking knight
And the yeoman went their way;
Their deeds are done, their songs forgot,
But the herdsman sings for ay.



"LOUD THEY MOCKED AT THE CLUMSY CHURL"

THE BOYHOOD OF MICHAEL ANGELO

BY ALEXANDER BLACK

ON a certain day, many hundred years ago, two boys walked homeward through the streets of the beautiful city of Florence. The name of one of the boys was Francesco Granacci, who was then a pupil of the leading painter of the city, Domenico Ghirlandajo. The name of the other boy, who had that day, in company with his friend, made his first visit to the great artist's studio, was Michael Angelo.

This was a great day for Michael Angelo. For months and years he had dreamed of being an artist, and now for the first time he had seen and spoken to the famous teacher, watched the work of the pupils gathered in the studio. Had it been left to his choice, Michael Angelo would have joined the school the next morning. But he had no reason to believe his father would allow him to take up paint brushes instead of

going into a profession, or the woolen trade, like his brothers.

In fact, it was because his parents, who were of some rank in Florence, though with little wealth, had planned for him a great position in law or politics, that Angelo had been sent to an academy where it was expected he would get a good education. But instead of studying his books, Angelo made chalk drawings on the walls and floor of his room. This greatly disappointed his father, who first rebuked him, and then, when the lessons were persistently neglected for the pictures, added a flogging. The whole family was worried about the boy's obstinate wish to be an artist. This was why the lad, elated by his visit to the art-school, was still doubtful of the effect his enthusiasm might produce at home.

This enthusiasm would have had little influence with Michael Angelo's father, but for one important fact. This important fact was that the boy's drawings had extraordinary merit. Nobody, not even the annoyed brothers and uncles who made such continued remonstrance, denied that they were remarkable. So that something more eloquent than Michael Angelo's spoken arguments was constantly pleading his

cause. Perceiving that his son had not merely great energy, and great hopes, but great natural aptitude for art, the father finally gave up his own cherished plans, and permitted Michael Angelo to become an apprentice of Ghirlandajo.

When this long-desired permission was given, Michael Angelo was just passing his thirteenth birthday. How much confidence the master had in his new apprentice is shown by the fact that instead of exacting a fee, or taking him on trial, he agreed to pay Michael Angelo six gold florins for the first year, eight for the second, and ten for the third. From the outset, the young artist pursued his studies, as well as the apprentice work assigned to him, with the utmost earnestness and activity. His progress in drawing astonished his companions, and almost bewildered his master, who one day exclaimed on seeing one of Angelo's original sketches: "The boy already knows more about art than I do myself."

At this time the control of the Florentine government was in the hands of Lorenzo de' Medici, then probably the most distinguished man in all Italy. Lorenzo took a most tyrannical view of the people's rights, and his personal habits were not always what they should have been. But he

was a man with a brilliant mind, who made great and successful efforts to increase the splendor of the city, and who came to be called Lorenzo the Magnificent. He gave every encouragement to art and literature, particularly when they might extend his own reputation for magnificence. His taste and judgment in matters of art were equal to his shrewdness and courage as a politician. During the time of Michael Angelo's apprenticeship, Lorenzo formed new plans for furthering art study in the gardens of San Marco, in which he placed many valuable examples of the ancient masters. When Lorenzo suggested to Ghirlandajo the sending of worthy pupils to study sculpture in these gardens, the master selected Michael Angelo and his friend Francesco.

It has frequently been said that the Florentine teacher was jealous of Michael Angelo's genius as a draftsman, and was prompted by this feeling, in turning the lad from painting to sculpture. Ghirlandajo had certainly received some occasion for irritation, since the apprentice was always very positive in his opinions, and, on one occasion at least, went so far as to correct a drawing which the master himself had given to one of his pupils as a model. Yet there



YOUNG MICHAEL ANGELO AT WORK UPON HIS FIRST PIECE OF SCULPTURE

is no evidence of any unkindly feeling in Ghirlandajo's recommendation. It is quite probable that Michael Angelo had shown a strong leaning toward sculpture. At any rate, he was as delighted to find himself in the gardens of San Marco as if he had been dropped into the Garden of Eden.

One afternoon the Duke Lorenzo in walking through the garden came upon young Michael Angelo, who was busily chiseling his first piece of sculpture. The Duke saw in the stone the face of a faun which the boy was copying from an antique mask, but which, with his usual impatience of imitation, he was changing so as to show the open lips and teeth. "How is it," said the Duke, drawing closer, "that you have given your faun a complete set of teeth? Don't you know that such an old fellow was sure to have lost some of them?" Michael Angelo at once saw the justice of the criticism. Artists are not always ready to receive adverse comment. Michael Angelo himself was quick-tempered and hard to move. A hot word to one of his boy companions on a certain occasion brought so severe a blow in the face, that all truthful portraits of Michael Angelo have since had to

show him with a broken nose. But the Duke's criticism was kindly given, and was plainly warranted, and the young sculptor could hardly wait until the Duke walked on before beginning the correction. When the Duke saw the faun's face again he found some of the teeth gone, and the empty sockets skilfully chiseled out.

Delighted with this evidence of the lad's willingness to seize and act upon a suggestion, and impressed anew by his artistic skill, the Duke made inquiries, learned that Michael Angelo had borrowed stone and tools on his own account in his eagerness to begin sculpture (he was first set at drawing from the statuary), and ended by sending for the boy's father. The result of the consultation was that the Duke took Michael Angelo under his own special patronage and protection, and was so well pleased after he had done it that no favor seemed too great to bestow upon the energetic young artist. Michael Angelo, then only fifteen, not only received a key to the Garden of Sculpture, and an apartment in the Medici Palace itself, but had a place at the Duke's table. In fact, a real attachment grew up between Michael Angelo and the Duke, who frequently called the boy to his own rooms, when he would open a cabinet of gems and intaglios,

seek his young visitor's opinions, and enter into long and confidential talks.

Michael Angelo found himself in the company of the best instructors, and otherwise surrounded by many influences that developed his mind and incited his ambition. The most illustrious people in Italy were daily visitors at the palace, where the Duke not only gave imposing entertainments, but gathered quiet groups of artists, writers, and musicians. It is likely that there were many distracting and even dangerous temptations in life at such a palace. But fortunately Michael Angelo had a strong will, and little love for things that were not noble. He permitted nothing to stop his progress in art.

It was under the encouragement of one of his teachers that Michael Angelo, when about seventeen, undertook to chisel an important bas-relief of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ, in which his success was marvelous. Michael Angelo himself, looking on the work many years later, said that he wished he had never given a moment to anything but sculpture.

This remark of Michael Angelo recalls the fact that at the time the Centaurs were carved the author of the work was steadily increasing his knowledge and grasp of painting and archi-

itecture, as well as acquiring useful ideas of history and literature. A world of thought-riches was opening up before him. It may, therefore, be imagined that his grief was very great when, at the end of three years of such happy advancement, the Duke Lorenzo died, and Michael Angelo returned to his father's house in much misery of mind, and set up his studio there. Lorenzo's son, Piero, asked the boy back to the palace. But the place never was the same, for the new Duke had not his father's qualities of mind. One of his whims was to induce Michael Angelo to work during a severe winter on an immense figure in snow. This was undoubtedly the finest snow man ever built; but Michael Angelo had no heart for work that so soon must melt away.

Before his return to the palace, Michael Angelo had begun a series of careful studies in anatomy, to familiarize himself with every line and dimension of the figure. He toiled at this study for years, until his mastery of the human form was complete. He never painted or chiseled a figure without working out in a drawing the most delicate details of the anatomy, so that no turn of vein or muscle might be false to the absolute

truth. It is by such means that any mastery is secured. Behind every work of genius, whether book, picture, or engine, is an amount of labor and pains—yes, and of *pain*—that would have frightened off a weak spirit.

When political disturbances broke out in Florence, Michael Angelo hurried away to Venice, and to Bologna. Poor Florence was always tumbling from one revolution into another. The troubles of Florence were reflected in the life of Michael Angelo, who never again found the peace of those San Marco gardens. But Michael Angelo's stern and courageous mind was never crushed by disappointment. After a life crowded with labors, he left behind him colossal triumphs in painting, in architecture, and in sculpture, besides making a great name as a poet. He was a giant in every labor that he undertook, one of the world's greatest men.

Michael Angelo was born in 1475 at a castle in Tuscany where his father held office as a Governor. His father's name was Ludovico Buonarroti, and he himself was christened Michelagnuolo Buonarroti, but for four centuries he has been popularly called Michael Angelo. The head of a faun, upon which the boy worked in the San Marco Gardens, may still be seen in one of the museums of Florence. The piece of sculpture representing Michael Angelo at work on the faun's head, shown on page 172, was executed by Emilio Zocchi, and occupies a place in the Pitti Gallery at Florence.

THE SHEPHERD-BOY OF VESPIGNANO

BY AGNES ELIZABETH THOMSON

LONG, long ago, when the world was some six hundred years younger than it is now, a certain little boy was born on the sunny slopes of Vespignano.

I dare say you never so much as heard of Vespignano before, and that is not to be wondered at, because it is only a wee bit of a hamlet, away off in the heart of Tuscany, of no importance to anybody, except to the few peasants whose uneventful lives are spent there.

Yet, because of this little boy who first opened his eyes within its ragged, rugged borders, the little hamlet, no doubt, takes a certain pride in itself, and when it has time to think about it at all, thinks it may surely hold up its head with the best.

This little boy's name was Giotto Bondone,—

or Bondone Giotto, very likely, he was called by his comrades, for the Italians have a queer fashion of twisting round their names until one cannot tell which is the Christian and which the surname!

Giotto was a happy-go-lucky little fellow from the very first. His father was but a simple farmer, who worked from early morning till long after the sun had gone to bed,—worked with a pair of patient white oxen in his master's corn-fields, and vineyards, and sheep-pastures, to be paid in the harvest-time with just enough corn and wine and wool to keep himself, his wife and his boy, happy and hearty.

It was not much that Father Bondone could give his little child besides a name, a sheep-skin with the wool still on for a coat, and plenty of sunshine and pure air.

But the child had something of his own better than any gift. He had a bright and happy nature, and an intelligence so remarkable that even when he could just walk and talk, it attracted all who saw him, and made him his father's pet.

When he was ten years old, Father Bondone thought it time he should begin to be useful,—time to be earning at least the salt to his por-

ridge,—so he was sent out to watch a few sheep in the fields.

I think he did more than keep the young lambs from straying.

I think he laid himself down on the ground, and forgot all about the sheep, sometimes, while from the blue skies, and green valleys, and brilliant flowers, and warmly tinted rocks of old Tuscany, he learned how to mix colors on his palette by and by, or from the spreading branches of the oak-trees he learned the secret of forming graceful arches and checkered patterns.

A wise man once assured the world that there are “Sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and good in everything;” the untaught little Giotto must have been able to find out the “good in everything” for himself, and not only were his sharp eyes quick to perceive, but his nimble fingers were quick to imitate.

He was always trying to draw some picture on any smooth bit of rock or slate that came to hand, although he had nothing better for a pencil than another bit of stone sharpened down to a point.

It happened, one day, that some trifling matter sent a celebrated Florentine artist up to the re-



CIMABUE

gion of Vespignano, and, as he was riding along, having lost his way, perhaps, he perceived not far from the road-side Father Bondone's quiet flocks comfortably grazing, while their youthful shepherd seemed very much engaged about something near by. The great artist was somehow drawn by the lad's intent attitude. He rode up to the boy, looked over his shoulder, and saw that he had been drawing one of the sheep on a piece of stone which he held upon his knee.

Cimabue—that was the name of the artist—was greatly astonished when he beheld the picture on the stone. He began to talk to this strange shepherd-lad, and, among other things, asked him how he would like to leave his hills and sheep-tending, his father and mother, and go away with him to Florence, and study drawing and art in earnest.

From the portrait of Master Cimabue that has come down to us, one would not think that any little boy would be willing to exchange father and mother for such a queer, bonneted gentleman; but Giotto loved drawing better than anything else on the face of the earth, so he answered joyously that he would like very much to go to Florence, inwardly thinking himself, I 'm sure,

the luckiest young shepherd-lad that ever drew breath.

Father Bondone gave his consent to the scheme as gladly as Giotto had given his, and so our hero went forth into the world to seek his fortune with the stranger from Florence.

And the teaching went on so wisely and so well, day after day, that in a few years the tables were turned, and lo! Master Cimabue had need to go to school to pupil Giotto! Think of that!

Yes, Giotto won great fame for himself in a short time. He painted picture after picture and church after church, in Florence and Pisa, in Arezzo and Assisi, in Siena, and a great many places besides, doing such good service for art—which for two hundred years had been going wrong in Italy—that to this day he is considered a great benefactor to the world. He was one of the first to give life to modern art, in making his works truly reflect Nature. Painting in imitation of Nature was a new thing in that day, and everybody was surprised and delighted with it. One writer of the time says of Giotto's pictures, as if it were a thing to be wondered at: "The personages who are in grief look melancholy, and those who are joyous look gay."

The fame of Giotto's genius and skill soon penetrated to Rome, the greatest city of the civilized world in those times. In all haste, the Pope sent off a courier to Florence to see what kind of a man this Giotto might be, and pass judgment upon his works, reasoning that if all were true that people said, it would be well to bring him to the Eternal City, to paint the walls of St. Peter's.

One bright morning, Giotto was busily engaged in his workshop, when the Pope's messenger entered, stated the reason of his visit, and finally requested a drawing which he might send to his master.

Giotto, who was very courteous, took a sheet of paper, and a brush dipped in red color; then, with one turn of the hand, he drew a circle so perfect and exact that it was a marvel to behold.

This done, he turned, smiling, to the courier, saying: "Here, sir, is the drawing you wished for."

"Am I to have nothing more than this?" inquired the messenger, surprised.

"That is enough and to spare," returned Giotto. "Send it with the rest, and you will see if it will be recognized."

The messenger, unable to obtain anything

more, went away very ill-satisfied, and fearing that he had been trifled with.

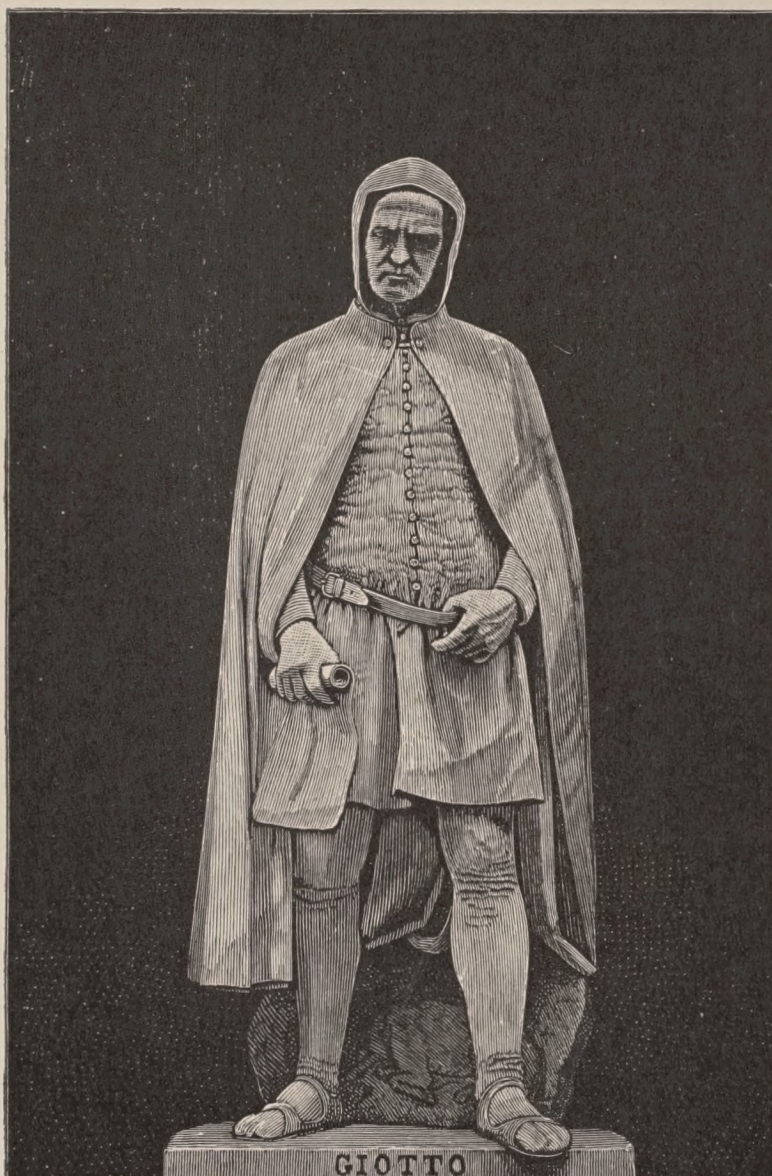
Nevertheless, having despatched other drawings to the Pope, with the names of those who had made them, he sent that of Giotto also, relating the mode in which he had made his circle; from which the Pope and such of his courtiers as were well versed in the subject, conceived the idea that if Giotto could surpass all the other painters of his time in this way, he could do so in other ways.

And out of this incident grew a proverb, which the Tuscans make use of to the present day.

"Tu sei più tondo che l'O di Giotto." "You are rounder than Giotto's O," they say, when they mean you are very dull and stupid, because the word that means "round" in Italian means also "dull."

Of course, Giotto was summoned to Rome, and of course he was glad enough to obey the summons, and to win new laurels. And it is a comfort to know that his wonderful talents were fully appreciated by the Pope and the people of Rome.

Numberless stories are told of Giotto's wit, as well as of his marvelous paintings.



STATUE OF GIOTTO, AT FLORENCE

When he was studying under Cimabue, it is said that he painted a fly on the nose of one of the figures his master was then working at,—a fly so like the real thing, that when Master Cimabue came in, he tried to brush it away with his hand!

If we may believe their biographers, a great many artists have painted remarkably life-like flies. I saw one of them myself in Antwerp. It was resting on the foot of a fallen angel, and was as large as a mouse! I must mention, however, that the angel itself was of colossal size.

But that work which endears our Giotto to the hearts of his countrymen, to the hearts of all those who love beauty, in fact, is his exquisite bell-tower in Florence—Giotto's Campanile.

Our own poet, Longfellow, has sung its praise, and indeed, of itself it seems a poem in stone.

It is a tall slender shaft of variegated marbles, detached from the church, as all bell-towers are in Italy, but it is so graceful, so beautiful, so rich in detail, and so perfect in proportion, that you cannot wonder men gaze on it with astonishment and admiration.

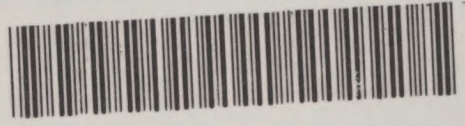
And, exquisite as it seems at first, it grows more exquisite as one becomes familiar with it.

Every portion is worthy of careful examination and study, and yet, considered as a whole, it is grand and perfect.

It is many and many a long year since Giotto folded his hands to rest forever beneath the shadow of the tower which is such a joy to us. He did not live to finish this, his last and best work, but from his designs his pupils were able to complete the building and his fame. And I can wish nothing pleasanter for you when you grow up, my young friends, than a month in Florence and a sight of Giotto's Campanile.

See picture of Giotto's tower on p. 124.

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